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The instructional capacity of the principal is critical to the success of effective schools. The conceptualization of principals as leaders of learning is an emergent concept that distills the significance of the role and function of principals as instructional leaders. This qualitative case study sought to examine and chronicle the key dispositions and practices that distinguish principals as instructional leaders. More specifically, this case investigated a principal-led professional development model that sought to determine the efficacy of an approach to teacher development through microteaching, espousing inquiry-oriented feedback. More specifically, this study investigated the lived experiences of teachers participating in a principal-facilitated professional development microteaching protocol, and to examine how teachers' experiences participating in this protocol impacted their teaching practice.

Guided by the primary research questions, "Is principal-led microteaching a viable tool to facilitate professional development within schools?" and "To what measure does hermeneutic reflection in the case of a principal-led microteaching protocol impact teachers' pedagogical practice?," this study investigates both the positionality of principals as leaders of learning and the impact of this role on a professional development protocol for teachers.

Phenomenology served as the theoretical and methodological framework for this study, and is central to the conceptual framework and interpretive analysis of this study's findings. More specifically, hermeneutic phenomenology was used to explore the

subjective experiences of teachers as it related to a principal-led professional development protocol employing microteaching.

Narrative data were collected through video-recorded observations and interviews, and reported using a phenomenological approach to provide insight into significant themes. In vivo coding was employed to analyze and report subsequent findings, and to explore a broader context of implications centering the theoretical and pragmatic functions of instructional leadership qua the principalship.

Findings established in this study address methods to develop alternate models of contiguous, job-embedded professional development designated to enhance teacher efficacy through microteaching and inquiry-oriented feedback. Additional findings offer recommendations for a framework to promote more efficacious professional development models in high school contexts, as well as recommendations for future study of principals as instructional leaders.

A CASE STUDY OF PRINCIPAL-LED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
USING MICRO-TEACHING AND INQUIRY-ORIENTED  
FORMATIVE FEEDBACK

by

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In honor of my immediate and extended family, whose sacrifices have been  
immeasurable.

Thank you for your support, guidance, encouragement and inspiration. This work is a  
testament that anything is possible.

Sabbath, Sojourner, Schylar, and Solomon, may my ceiling be your floor!

## APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation, written by Larry D. Canady III, has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The conceptualization of principal as instructional leader permeates the canon of education leadership literature (Blase & Blase, 1999; Dowling & Sheppard, 1976; DuFour & DuFour, 2002; Glanz & Neville, 1997; Glickman, 1990; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Jenkins, 2009). Yet overwhelmingly, the literature reveals that most principals fall short in this area. “While most would agree that instructional leadership is critical in the realization of effective schools, it is seldom prioritized” (Jenkins, 2009, p. 34). Thus, it is accepted that key dispositions, attitudes, and behaviors promote principals’ intentionality as it relates to instructional leadership.

Moreover, the literature identifies a dearth in the quality of formative feedback given to teachers by principals, a behavior that is purported to be the single-most effective variable in increasing teacher efficacy (Uchiyama & Wolf, 2002). Teachers overwhelmingly report rarely receiving adequate or substantive feedback from supervisors about their practice but are welcome to it (Ingham & Greer, 1992). Instead, supervisor feedback many times takes the form of one-dimensional rating scales, or is seen as a tool in the hire-fire process (Dunkleberger, 1982). The prescriptions are clear; principals must engage in more focused efforts to develop teachers, thereby reinforcing their role as instructional leaders, or as DuFour and Marzano (2011) conceptualize, principals as “leaders of learning.” Only through the contiguous, efficacious professional

development of teachers will student achievement be positively impacted. Consequently, this study addressed methods to develop an alternate model of principal-led professional development that engages teachers in analysis of instructional feedback in an effort to enhance efficacious teaching.

There is an inseparable link between principal leadership, cultural responsiveness, and the principal's ability to effectively lead urban schools. Research on culturally relevant practice consistently emphasizes that school leaders within urban contexts require salient skills that are necessary to effectively serve within these contexts (Blase & Blase, 2004; Fears, 2004; Gay, 2000; Gordon, 2004; Guerra & Nelson, 2007; Hofstede, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1995b; Stronge, 2006). Making sense of the organizational, emotional, moral, and cultural dimensionality of urban schools and the subsequent requisite leadership behaviors principals must demonstrate to be successful within those contexts has spawned great debate, examination, and policy. In short, urban schools are unique social and organizational machines that require salient skills, unique leadership dispositions, and grave commitment from their leaders. As Salome Thomas-El (2003), an urban school principal from Philadelphia chronicles in his memoir, *I Choose to Stay: A Black Teacher Refuses to Desert the Inner City*, his resolute choice to stay in urban education was rooted in a moral imperative to serve urban constituents, despite the litany of challenges practitioners face in leading and teaching in urban contexts. Additional research (Delpit, 1995; Gay, 2000; Hale, 1986; Ladson-Billings, 1994) further contextualizes Thomas-El's (2003) thinking with discussion of the salient dispositions that practitioners must develop to effectively lead within urban schools, holding that

school leaders must respond to macro-level socio-political, cultural, and economic variables that imbue urban schools. Given the demands of these external factors, principals must act as gate-keepers in articulating and protecting schools' organizational mission and vision, and be nimble in their willingness to "support and facilitate efforts to implement change" (Guskey & Huberman, 1995, p. 389).

While a miscellany of others (Bloom & Erlandson, 2003; Dillard, 1995; Reitzug & Patterson, 1998) have explored the complexities of leaders' cultural responsiveness within urban, high poverty schools, the body of literature framing culturally responsive leadership consistently cites a series of repeating core beliefs about the requisite dispositions, as well as the cultural and organizational requirements needed to teach and lead within urban contexts (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Lomotey, 1989a; Schewich, 1998). Villegas and Lucas (2002) distills these dispositions to include: "an awareness of leaders' responsibility to promote educational change, an awareness of the agential capacity of their leadership qua sociopolitical consciousness, and an acceptance of constructivist views of teaching, learning" and leadership (p. xiv). As the scholarship suggests, the demands to teach in and govern urban schools are challenging, but as Thomas-El (2003) avows, urban teachers and leaders must, as his memoir suggests, "*choose to stay.*"

The investigation of these dispositions is of personal and professional interest. As a student, the totality of my school experience was spent in urban schools, where I witnessed the nurturing effects of committed urban school teachers and principals in guiding my matriculation through those urban contexts. Though impoverished my schools were insular urban oases, staffed by caring, committed school leaders. Aptly, I

would go on to serve in similar urban contexts as a teacher, and ultimately as a school administrator.

Despite positive memories of my urban school experiences, my journey as a teacher in the urban schools of Atlanta, Boston, and Washington, D.C. were antithetical to the nostalgic experiences of my youth. In fact, while working in these settings as a novice teacher I experienced conflicted feelings—I argued internally, “Why am I not reaching these students? I am a person of color. I come from a low income community and was reared in urban schools. Did I make the right decision in becoming a teacher in an urban school?” Overwhelmingly, I felt unable to reach my students to the degree of their academic and social-emotional needs. Unpacking and deconstructing my own personal metanarratives, in true postmodernist fashion, I was left with more questions, than answers. “Why were these students not wired to be responsive to me? Why wasn’t I wired to be responsive to them? Could I close the achievement gap that existed between my students and their more affluent, non-urban counterparts? Could I meet their educational and emotional needs?” As a black man from an urban area, I wasn’t supposed to have to wrestle with, unpack, nor contend with the same dispiriting factors centering race, class, and gender that my liberal white counterparts—Ron Clark, Esme Codell, and LouAnne Johnson so eloquently wrote about, or so I thought.

Wouldn’t my education at one of the nation’s leading Historically Black Colleges, my survival instinct as a native Washingtonian, teacher practicum experiences within urban contexts, and my ability to code-switch instinctively permit me certain inroads that my non-urban, non-black, non-economically disadvantaged counterparts could never



have? Were these cultural identities not adequate cultural capital to grant me access into the idiosyncratic spaces of these urban schools? In the midst of my uncertainty, frustration ensued due to a lack of guidance. In response, I relied on the power of relationship building to gain inroads with my students. Searching for answers, I turned to the works of Delpit (1995), Ladson-Billings (1994), Kunjufu (2002), and hooks (1994) to guide me. Within the pages of these emancipatory texts, learning was framed as a liberatory, social practice, and therefore I surmised that if I could capture students socially and emotionally, I could teach them. Ultimately, after more than a decade of work in urban schools, witnessing the heights and pitfalls of service in them, I too have chosen to stay.

Years later, as a novice assistant principal serving in the lowest performing middle school in a mid-sized urban district in North Carolina, I would have never imagined that I would revisit the same personal and professional duress I experienced at the start of my career. The same disconnectedness, sense of failure, and uncertainty I faced resurfaced, but in this iteration, they were not related to my ability to reach students but rather to *lead their teachers*.

Entering the role of administrator in one of the lowest performing urban middle schools in North Carolina, I believed in the power of democratized processes and collaborative leadership. I knew that as a new leader it would be critical to marshal the support of veteran teachers in developing new teachers, and that their support would be critical in engendering the vision of leadership and mission throughout the learning community--therein laid the problem. There were few veteran teachers on the faculty; in

fact, of the 51 faculty members, 70% were new to the school. Outweighing the challenge of leading a virtually new faculty was the fact that not only were these teachers new to our building, they were also new to the profession. Of the total faculty population roughly 40% were in their first 3-5 years of teaching.

These data revealed two clear points. First, my leadership would require professional development centering rudimentary practices like classroom management, lesson planning, and other organizational aspects of inducting new teachers, but moreover, my leadership would require contiguous professional development in the areas central to teaching and learning. This was my first pragmatic encounter with the literature on “principal as instructional leader,” wherein “instructional leadership is often conceived of as a blend of supervision, staff development and curriculum development that facilitates school improvement” (Smith & Andrews, 1989).

The literature conceptualizing “principal as instructional leader” is rife with recommendations and prescriptions on the dispositions and behaviors required by principals to distinguish themselves as leaders of teaching within their school communities. Reitzug (1994) conceptualizes instructional leadership qua the principalship to encompass leadership that facilitates staff development, while Sheppard (1996) frames the criticality of promoting the professional development of teachers as a key leadership behavior and designates it as one of the greatest indicators a successful school. Moreover, Obi (2002) prescribes that principals must develop contiguous professional development opportunities for faculty, consisting of two developmental arms, one that targets leadership development and a second that operationalizes a plan of

development designed to change teachers' role performance. Enueme and Egwunyenga (2008) further prescribe routine roles principals must exhibit in distinguishing themselves as instructional leaders that include, "[routine] class-visitation, observations, conferences, seminars and workshops, professional associations, in-services and educational programs" (p. 13). Summarily, "the principal is expected to provide the appropriate leadership which will assist each staff member make a maximum contribution to the schools' effort to providing quality education" (Enueme & Egwunyenga, 2008, p. 13). If, as proposed, there are salient requisite needs principals must exhibit to be successful in urban contexts, presumptively, teachers in urban contexts require similar dispositions for them to be effective. As leaders of learning, principals must marshal teachers in the acquisition of skills to become more efficacious teachers.

In light of the literature, the sense of confusion, frustration, and nihilism that I experienced as a novice teacher in an urban school could have been allayed had my principal typified the leadership behaviors proposed by the literature. Furthermore, if as I propose, there is a link between principal leadership, cultural responsiveness, and the ability to effectively lead urban schools, there too is a link between the personal and professional commitments that urban school educators and leaders must make when serving in urban contexts. My experiences within urban schools, as a product of and now leader in them offered me salient personal and professional experiences that imbued my cultural responsiveness to the parents, students, and stakeholders within these contexts. Yet paradoxically, I felt early in my career that I'd failed, and I struggled to understand why. I spent my life being served as a student within urban contexts, my collegiate career

volunteering in urban schools, the extent of my teaching and administrative career serving within urban contexts, yet early in my career, I felt unsuccessful as a practitioner in these spaces. Now as an emerging scholar, I engage in examining the structures and function of leadership within urban contexts for greater insight on the relationship between the dispositions of principal leadership and teacher efficacy within urban contexts.

Of the ever-expanding literature conceptualizing the principalship, instructional leadership remains central to what scholars and practitioners agree is a strong indicator for a successful school. Sergiovanni (2006) distills, “successful leadership . . . within the principalship is directed toward the improvement of teaching and learning, and as such, principals must designate opportunities to promote teacher development” (p. 7). For my experience as a novice school administrator in a low-performing school, achieving these lofty expectations, as suggested in the literature, would require not just theoretical awareness, but exacting execution to be successful. Moreover, the stakes were high; entering in the latter stages of NCLB sanctions as a result of historically low performance, the success of our students, our teachers, and *my job* were dependent on our administrative team making serious achievement gains--and fast. So, I braced myself, and began with what every administrator is required to do—observations and evaluations.

I found early on however that this process fell short of adequately ensuring that the most efficacious teaching and learning were occurring. First, I gave teachers volumes of feedback, yet when I returned to monitor their progress, few of the recommendations I made were being implemented effectively. Second, many of the teachers expressed fear

of “bad evaluations,” and rightfully so, as negative appraisals were linked to summative performance appraisals, which for non-tenured teachers meant nonrenewal the following school year. This fear was pervasive and in many cases palpable whenever I entered classrooms to complete their observations. I knew for true change to occur I would have to equip teachers with the tools to be successful, the first step of which was to allay their fears of being observed. This meant reconditioning teachers not to fear my feedback, nor my approach in delivering it. I needed them to understand that I was not only “on their side,” but I was committed to teaching them how to become more effective teachers.

Over time, it became clearer to me that the journey that I had taken as a new teacher in those urban schools was similar to the journey that these teachers I was now leading were taking. It would be my moral imperative to ensure that they felt supported and guided, unlike my experiences as a novice teacher. I quickly came to the realization that my leadership would have to be both instructional and transformative. This thinking is buttressed by social learning theory that explores the process of developing new behaviors to achieve behavioral change within institutionalized settings (Ormrod, 1999). My role as a school leader would be as much about the proverbial “books, butts and boilers” as it was about reshaping the behaviors of the teachers and their perceptions of the role and function of my role as school leader. If teaching was to be a social practice, then *leading*, too, would have to be.

### **Justifications for Need for this Research**

The literature is replete with studies that emphasize the importance of feedback as it relates to job performance and professional development (Boswell & Boudreau, 2002;

Luthans, 2000; Youngcourt, Leiva, & Jones, 2007), but specific to educational leadership the conclusions are clear that classroom observations carry a high premium as a means to appraise and evaluate teachers and to improve instruction (Butler & Winne, 1995; Donnelly & Fitzmaurice, 2011; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Stronge, 2002). As Moore (2007) asserts, “The ever-changing role of the principal has created a position of leadership so complex that traditional methods of evaluation or feedback can no longer provide enough data to develop required skills” (p. 38). This argument challenges principals to employ expanded methods of observing, appraising and subsequently developing teachers. Kortner (1993) adds:

As the supervisor goes through the observation process, the establishment of supervisor-teacher rapport is the most important element. The observation process, often criticized and abandoned by supervisors . . . is one of the building relationships between the individual supervisor and the individual teacher. Humanness, self-respect, relaxation, communication, contracts, agreements, collaboration, helpfulness, and therapeutics are all components of the supervisor-teacher relationship. A skilled supervisor, no matter which observational method he or she chooses, should be able to achieve organizational goals and objectives, and to meet the individual needs of teachers. (p. 2)

As the author holds, new methods of teacher appraisal will require principals to demonstrate more personable and collaborative dispositions while performing observations and evaluations. As Kouzes and Posner (2007) frame, this newly expanded supervisory role must aim to be interactive, not authoritarian, confirming what I discovered experientially, through my professional practice. Studies by Brinko (1990), Cuccia (1988), Ingham and Greer (1992), and Miles (1989) further confirm the positive

correlation between mutually communicative observations where teachers and administrators openly and fluidly communicate, and increased school performance.

Despite the method, the point is clear: the frequency of principals observing teachers is not nearly as critical to teacher efficacy and ultimately student achievement, as the quality of their feedback. As Turnbull et al. (2009) echo, “Students don’t improve just because the principal is in the classroom. But the critical point is that you do not influence that teacher until you provide feedback” (p. 51). In addition, the literature overwhelmingly reports that principals often give teachers unusable formative feedback (The New Teacher Project, 2010; The Wallace Foundation Report, 2012; Zatynski, 2012) that is “infrequent, unfocused, undifferentiated, unhelpful and inconsequential” (The New Teacher Project, 2010, p. 1). The culprits principals overwhelmingly cite are the frenetic pace of the principalship, (Lovely, 2004) mounting administrative demands (Nehring, 2002), and lack of time (Lunenburg & Irby, 2005) that stymie their ability to offer more cogent feedback. Additional literature by Turnbull et al. (2009) reveals a progressive shift in principals’ mode of collecting observation data and offering feedback. Rather than the traditional ethnographic method of data collecting and subsequent reporting, principals increasingly are opting observation instruments with checklist design and handheld devices that fail to give teachers individualized narrative feedback, under the pretense that these methods save time and offer convenience. These time-saving conveniences only add to the depthless feedback teachers are routinely offered.

Turnbull et al. (2009) confirm this trend in a study of the observation routines of principals that reports principals increasingly are opting for more frequent classroom

visits, yet offer less substantive feedback. The study found on average “principals spent far less time providing feedback to teachers [during formal observations] (60 minutes per week) than on walk-throughs (3 hours, 59 minutes per week)” (Turnbull et al., 2009 <http://www.ernweb.com/public/1175.cfm>). The implications confirm the timeless aphorism that “quality beats quantity.” The recommendations are clear—quality in instructional observation, evaluation and feedback, outweigh the comparative frequency of observations alone. I submit that principals cannot use less proven methods for the sake of convenience nor take short-cuts in providing substantive feedback to teachers, lest the results be grave. In particular, for struggling teachers like I was, and those I now lead, cogent feedback is critical to their professional survival.

Given these assumptions about leadership, and the role of the principal as a leader of learning, I submit the leadership activities that teaching principals engage in, serve to challenge the traditional, classical-management, technical-rational dispositions that have traditionally been associated with the principalship and ultimately offer new insight into the key behaviors and dispositions twenty-first century principals must demonstrate. “The role of instructional leader is a relatively new concept, emerging in the 1980s, influenced largely by research that found effective schools usually have principals who stressed the importance of leadership in this area” (Brookover & Lezotte, 1982, as cited in Jenkins, 2009, p. 34). “In the first half of the 1990s, attention to instructional leadership seemed to waver, displaced by discussions of school-based management and facilitative leadership” (Lashway, 2002, para. 1). Resurgence of this conceptualization of principal as instructional leader has resurfaced as a direct response to the era of accountability and the



emphasis on schools' performance linked to student achievement. It will remain, if not intensify. It will be through these "new approaches" (Stronge, 2002) that instructional leaders create successful learning environments.

Given an overview of the literature, this study summarily addresses methods to develop an alternate model of professional development designated to enhance teacher efficacy, democratic practice, and dialogic praxis among teachers and principals as prescribed by Uchiyama and Wolf (2002) who argue that principals must "create successful learning environments, cultivating a professional learning community," while "setting goals for reform" (p. 82). Guided by the primary research questions, "Is principal-led microteaching a viable tool to facilitate professional development within schools?" and "What are the key dispositions, attitudes and behaviors that distinguish principals as leaders of learning?," this study investigates both the positionality of principals as leaders of learning and the impact of this role on the efficacy of teachers. Additional foci of the study include an examination of the relationship between principal as formative coach, and its impact on teacher efficacy, the implications of which may designate recommendations for a framework to promote more efficacious professional development in high school contexts, as well as recommendations for future study.

A review of the literature presents organizational, behavioral, and leadership theories to foundationalize this investigation, as well as literature on this origins of microteaching. Later chapters define and frame the research design and present discussion of this study's findings using in vivo coding. As a final preface, this study

provides implications for the interpretation of this study's findings and offers recommendations for future study.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

In addition to literature on educational leadership theory it is critical to analyze the body of behavioral and organizational theory that foundationalize the conceptualization of principals as supervisors and evaluators. It is necessary to illuminate this literature because administrative and organizational tasks within the principalship are routinely cited as the variables that stymie principals from engaging in activities related to championing instruction. Principals juggle a miscellany of tasks each requiring varied leadership dispositions, from organizational and administrative to managerial and instructional. The problem is, as principals balance this bevy of contiguously spinning roles instructional leadership routinely receives the least attention. As Duze (2012) cites, “often times, more attention is accorded to managerial and administrative tasks and that of the instructional leader is relegated to others in the administrative hierarchy even though the core business of a school is teaching and learning” (p. 112). Stronge (1988) and Weindling (1990) estimate that nearly one-tenth of principals’ time is devoted to providing instructional leadership, while Farkas et al. (2001) concluded that instructional leadership “must contend with the overcrowded agenda that so many school leaders appear to already face” (p. 11). The literature is clear, the principalship is a frenetic role marked with increasing organizational demands and the need for complex and dimensional leadership dispositions and acute managerial acumen.

The success of students and teachers rests on the principal's ability to traverse the intrepid waters of these competing demands. One fact is clear, the role of the principal as instructional leader mustn't remain overlooked nor underdeveloped. Through examination of the underpinnings of the conceptualization of the principal as instructional leader, it is necessary to reemphasize the importance of principals as leaders of learning to expand thinking about the principals' roles as instructional leader, and to offer recommendations for an alternative model of professional development.

The ever-expanding role of principal as instructional leader is relatively new, emerging in the early 1980s. Sergiovanni (1984) illuminates the imperative for principals to become instructional leaders, "proposing one of the earliest models of instructional leadership" (McEwan, 2003, p. 5). Acheson and Smith (1986) later firm up a definition of instructional leadership as "leadership that is directly related to the processes of instruction where teachers, learners, and the curriculum interact" (p. 3). This literature spawned new thinking in and around the behavioral and organizational roles of the principal as a school leader and ushered a paradigmatic shift in the behaviors of, and subsequent praxis within the principalship. This "shift of emphasis from principals being managers or administrators to instructional or academic leaders" (Duze, 2012, p. 112) has been largely "influenced by research which found that effective schools usually had principals who stressed the importance of instructional leadership" (Brookover & Lezotte, 2002, p. 1). Prior to the conceptualization of principals as instructional leaders, the lion's share of scholarship centering principals gave "attention to . . . school-based management and facilitative leadership" (Lashway, 2002, para. 1). Principals were

characterized as facilitators, managers, and evaluators bound within the context of organizational and role theories.

Analysis of early leadership literature of the principalship cites use of dominant technical-rational theory. This approach focused on the function of leadership as it related to influencing the organizational function of schools rather than the efficacy of teachers. Subsequently, leadership studies predating the conceptualization of “principal as instructional leader” viewed leadership through a managerial and facilitative lens. Leadership through a technical-rational perspective, Ogawa & Bossert (1995) assert, “is related to organizational roles or offices” (p. 42). The technical-rational perspective on organizations locates the competence and authority of decision making within the context of managerial positions atop organizational hierarchies, in this case seated in the principalship. Widespread adherence to this particular expression of leadership, and its assumptions, is evident in the design of leadership studies that emphasize rigid, highly-structuralized hierarchies and authoritativeness of the principal. “Studies of organizational leadership with rare exceptions are studies of top-level managers such as principals and superintendents” (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995, p. 42).

The technical-rational perspective of the principalship emphasizes two basic leadership assumptions: first, principals possessing a goal orientation in identifying organizational deficits of schools (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995, p. 42), and second, principals’ development of formal structures to enhance the efficiency of the organization to attain those goals (House, 1981; Ogawa & Bossert, 1995). Analysis of the principalship through this perspective emphasized principals as top-down managers and

evaluators. Comparatively, Sergiovanni's (1992) redaction of the principal as "instructional leader" and later DuFour & Marzano's (2011) conceptualization of principals as "leaders of learning" decenters thinking about the managerial role of principals in schools. Subsequent literature on the principal as an instructional leader continues to deemphasize the rational-technical analysis of the role, framing new ways of leading and thinking about the role of leadership in schools.

The challenge with examining the functionality of principals through arcane and a seemingly myopic rational-technical view of leadership is analogous to viewing an iceberg in the distance, that is, you only capture the top. Leaders are evident at all levels of school organizations and must be deputized to engage in democratic decision-making through all levels, especially in schools. Moreover, within more contemporary framings of the principalship, emphasizing instructional leadership requires viewing the impact of the principalship, especially as a leader of learning. This requires analysis through a behavioral perspective, not an organizational one. The efficacy of schools isn't measured by the performance of principals alone; rather, schools are appraised based on the collective synergy of the functionalist cogs within the organizational machine. This includes teachers. Moreover, with the growing demands associated with the era of accountability it is implausible for principals to run schools in the isolation of their rugged boot-strap individualism. The emphasis on principals as leaders of learning, which has become central to educational and leadership literature, elicits that leading effective schools will require the abandonment of the isolatory, John Wayne- style principals (Williams, 2009) of days bygone in exchange for more democratic ones.

Within the context of behaviorist theory, Vygotsky (1978) offers a more acute lens through which to examine the principal as a “leader of learning” given the proposition that both teaching and leading are both social acts. Behavioral theory conceptualizes leadership as behaviors and actions rather than inherent traits (Oyinlade, 2007), which presumptively assumes that principals influence their organizations because of what they do, not because of the authority they possess inherent to their role as principal. The classical-management model of the principalship, framed by Weber’s nineteenth-century bureaucratic managerial model, undergirds the traditional model of principal as manager. It is antithetical to DuFour & Marzano’s (2011) framing of the principalship that decenters the axis of the principal’s power from facilitative to instructional. Behavioral theory identifies core responses and actions that distinguish principals as leaders of learning, which within the context of this study is a principal-led professional development model using microteaching and inquiry-oriented feedback. For this study viewing instructional leadership through the principalship will help to examine the ways in which principals shape the culture of school organizations through behaviors that promote teacher development.

Chan (2005) pragmatizes the discourse on instructional leadership vis-à-vis the principalship, asserting “a principal must not merely communicate in words, but by deeds to convince staff that change is happening at all levels” (Chan, 2005, para. 2). Thus, principals as leaders of learning must engage in practice that shapes school culture, and distinguishes them as instructional leaders. Blase and Blase (2000) identify discrete behaviors that distinguish principals as instructional leaders. “Making suggestions, giving

feedback, modeling effective instruction, supporting collaboration and providing professional development opportunities” are among behaviors that distinguish principals as instructional leaders (Phillips, 1996, p. 2).

Weindling (1990) suggests there are principals who are engaging in the vital work necessary to impact teaching and learning directly in their learning communities. Given this, the research proposed here will investigate a principal-led professional development model that seeks to examine how teachers’ experiences participating in this protocol impacted their teaching practice. Guided by the primary research questions, “Is principal-led microteaching a viable tool to facilitate professional development within schools?” and “To what measure does hermeneutic reflection in the case of a principal-led microteaching protocol impact teachers’ pedagogical practice?,” this study investigates the implementation of a principal-led professional development protocol using microteaching.

Exploring teacher efficacy is as complex as it is dimensional, in that there are varying and competing discourses centering what variables make teachers effective. This proposed research will restrict discussion of the principal’s impact on teacher efficacy as it relates to vocabulary acquisition, more specifically how teachers introduce, integrate, teach, extend, and evaluate academic and content vocabulary throughout the curricula.

This study will address methods to develop an alternate model of site-based, principal-led, professional development designated to enhance teacher efficacy as it relates to teaching essential vocabulary. Additionally, this case study will offer recommendations for a framework to promote more efficacious site-based, principal-led



professional development models in high school contexts, as well as recommendations for future study of principals as instructional leaders. Basic assumptions of this research include the presumption that the clearest and most routine method of contiguous site-based, principal-led professional development comes in the form of teacher observation.

Principals must engage in more focused efforts to develop teachers, thereby reinforcing their role as instructional leaders, or as DuFour and Marzano (2011) conceptualize, principals as “leaders of learning.” Only through the contiguous, efficacious professional development of teachers will student achievement be positively impacted.

### **Feedback**

Across a variety of industries, performance appraisals are a mainstay of professional practice. Feedback from these appraisals are often linked to the hiring and firing process, and in many cases become the basis for professional goal-setting. Within the context of educational leadership, principals are required to routinely appraise teachers. Ostensibly, principals’ feedback to teachers about the practice of teaching has a direct relationship to teachers’ efficacy, and ultimately, student achievement. The benefits of feedback are broad; feedback is critical in guiding teachers in prospective decision-making, for mitigating pedagogical errors, valuable for reflection, and for goal-setting.

Regardless of the nature of the evaluators’ focus, it is widely acknowledged that the process of evaluation and the resulting feedback are pertinent to the success of teachers’ microteaching experiences (Amobi, 2005; Benton-Kupper, 2001; Wilkinson,

1996). Albers and Goodman (1999) and Shin et al. (2006) illuminate the positive relationship between routine feedback, reflection, and professional development, asserting that behaviors that include suggestion-offering, praise-offering, and questioning lead to critical professional development. These behaviors are vital in the congress between principals and teachers as it relates to clearly articulating areas for growth and development. These goals serve to operationalize performance goal setting that is essential to teachers' steps in developing their practice. Critical to actualizing these goals is the symbiotic relationship between principal feedback, teacher reflection, and goal setting. It is through this recursive cycle that teachers engage in the work necessary to become more efficacious practitioners.

The discussion of feedback is foundational to this discourse for three critical reasons. First, the literature overwhelmingly purports that principals fail to adequately offer it to teachers. Second, the feedback that is offered is often not substantive in adequately problematizing teachers' deficits. Third, feedback not linked to professional reflection and goal-setting is both inchoate and ineffectual. As Hattie and Timperley (2007) reveal, all feedback is not effective feedback. They distinguish four levels of feedback that principals give to teachers, and their purpose:

1. Feedback about the task
2. Feedback about the processing of the task
3. Feedback about self-regulation
4. Feedback about the self as a person (pp.90-94).

The quality of feedback influences the degree to which principals influence teacher efficacy. Feedback about the task includes information about errors teachers made, or may include the need for more information (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). This may include a principal offering feedback to a teacher, as was the case when I was a new teacher covering a unit on immigration. While being observed, a student raised his hand to ask what the term *émigré* meant in the reading passage to which I haphazardly and albeit erroneously retorted, “Oh, it’s the French spelling of the immigration.” The feedback from my principal was direct--“Do your homework to avoid misinforming students.”

The Southeast Center for Teaching Quality published a 1999 report illuminating the imperative for principals to ensure teachers know content. “In our nation in at-risk and urban schools . . . students need the most sophisticated teachers, who understand both *content* and the pedagogy” (p. 9). They add, principals must ensure “teachers . . . are . . . qualified and competent with vast content knowledge and the ability, through quality preparation and ongoing development and support, to ensure that all children can learn” (p. i). Hattie and Timperley’s (2007) second level of feedback involves feedback principals give about processing of a task. This processing involves the relationship between teachers’ pedagogical choices and the quality of their pedagogy. This could come in a similar iteration to the feedback I received from my principal after I invited her to attend classroom presentations that my World History class had worked on for nearly two months, only to find that less than half of my students completed the assignment. Glue oozed from their poster-boards as a sign that students had not only waited until the

last minute to complete the assignment, but they had been finished moments before the deadline. Needless to say I was mortified when my principal left the room less than fifteen minutes into the presentations, a clear sign of disaster. Her feedback read hauntingly, “Always create benchmarks and submission dates when assigning projects, or you’ll get what you got.” Duly noted—*Lesson: feedback is a gift*. Literature by Butler and Winne (1995) reverberate this holding, “Successful [teachers] are able to translate feedback about the task into feedback about the process. . . . They generate their own cognitive feedback (linking characteristics of the task and their process with those results” (p. 22).

The fourth stage of Hattie and Timperley’s (2007) framing of levels of feedback includes principals offering teacher feedback on self-regulation. This concept, according to the authors entail, “[teachers] creating internal routines that include figuring out when they need more information, or an assessment or suggestions, and strategies for getting feedback” (p. 28). Hattie and Timperly (2007) suggest that this level of feedback, closely related to self-efficacy or self-actualization, is critical in teachers realizing their own agency in problem-solving as it relates to their self-efficacy and prospective performance. In essence, this level of feedback involves teachers not waiting for principals to identify areas of weakness but rather purposively seeking to mitigate performance concerns on their own. This is much like I was offered from a veteran principal who admonished in one my evaluations, “During the time observed, it was evident that you were not willing to let a single student move on in the lesson unless they were able to cite the seven functions of the president, and to provide examples for each. What appeared to be the

warm-up took forty minutes.” “*Invest in a clock*” is what I extrapolated. When the last bell sounded, I bounded to the nearest Wal-Mart and purchased the priciest digital kitchen timer money could buy, only to realize after replacing it twice in the next two months that the analog timers from The Dollar General worked just as efficiently. To my chagrin, my tangential lectures on everything-but-the-kitchen-sink subsumed 40 minutes of a 90-minute period, something that could have been easily remedied by a simple kitchen timer. As Hattie and Timperley (2007) reveal, “Feedback, about self-regulation is effective to the degree that it enhances self-efficacy” (p. 29). Without fail, every year after receiving that feedback, *kitchen timer*, was the first item on my teacher supply list. That one crucial piece of feedback helped me to become more aware of how I spent instructional time and ultimately revolutionized my teaching. The feedback I received from my principal prompted me to act, and my decision to purchase the clock was more far-reaching than any formal feedback she could give. Moreover, when I analyzed the significance of my principal’s feedback it became clear that not only was the digital timer valuable to maximizing instructional time, but the broader epiphany lay in understanding the currency of instructional time, and the criticality of protecting it. To this end, this principal’s feedback enhanced my self-efficacy.

Lastly, Hattie and Timperely (2007) discuss the feedback principals offer to teachers about them as people. The authors interrogate this citing,

Feedback about the person is generally not a good idea, for two reasons. First, it doesn’t contain information that can be used to further learning, so it’s not formative . . . It leads to a kind of fatalism. In contrast, feedback about the processes [teachers] use . . . fosters belief that achievement is related to specific

strategies, specific kinds of effort that are within their control and not innate ability. (p. 29)

As the writers suggest, failure to offer teachers credible feedback leads to instructional nihilism. Without formative feedback teachers operate without the tools to devise methods for improvement. Failure to equip teachers with constructive feedback leaves them to “figure out” their performance on their own and can reinforce less than efficacious skills. Like the feedback a retiring principal offered on my summative evaluation in the domain titled, “Areas for Improvement,” which simply read:

None at this time.

As a second year teacher my chest swelled with pride at the thought of not needing to improve on *anything*. I was just that good; until I read the next domain titled, “Strengths.” The words were eerily familiar:

None at this time.

Clearly the culprit of a fast-ditch cut and paste effort in Microsoft Word, the critical opportunity to impact my professional growth and development paled in comparison to my evaluator’s submission deadline, leaving me, a formative teacher, to vacillate on the tide of uncertainty, having neither strengths nor weaknesses. *How could this be?*

As indicated in the aforementioned literature, feedback is a critical tool in guiding professional practice. Allen and Eve (1968) decry traditional teacher evaluations characterized as “appraisals of the experience [that are] purely subjective and arbitrary”

(p. 181). Albers and Goodman (1999) and Shin et al. (2006) problematize ineffective feedback in organizations, suggesting that forms of feedback that lack heft and substantiveness are counterintuitive in aiding teachers to becoming more effectual practitioners. In essence, feedback unanchored by probing, questioning, suggestions, and goal-setting is unusable feedback. Leaving teachers to vacillate on the tide of conjecture is neither efficacious nor professional. As Hatton and Smith (1995) deduce, “Reflection is deliberate thinking about action with a view to its improvement” (p. 35), as such, it is foundational in teachers’ ability to engage in the structured work of improving their practice. If as Hatton and Smith (1994), Kagan (1992), and Kettle and Sellars (1996) assert, reflection for pre-service teachers is an integral professional skill necessary for the development of efficacious teacher candidates, then contiguous professional development, via reflection, is necessary to continually develop the efficacy of in-service practitioners.

Tunstall and Gipps (1996) offer additional literature to explore the criticality of principals offering formative feedback to teachers. They distinguish two major arcs of feedback in the literature—descriptive and evaluative. Tunstall and Gipps’s (1996) typology offers an additional perspective through which to explore formative feedback.

Descriptive feedback within principal-led microteaching is feedback that is offered to the learner that describes the steps teachers prospectively take in order to move forward in the learning process. This feedback, as its moniker elicits, describes the steps teachers must take to improve. This type of feedback is intended to tell the learner what they must to do to improve their practice. Descriptive feedback is intended to be guiding

feedback and prescriptive and has the potential to be subjective (Brookhart, 2007).

Comparatively, evaluative feedback is less prescriptive. This feedback is a summation of what was observed and nothing more. Using this mode of feedback, principals may merely record their findings without offering critical recommendations that guide teachers toward more efficacious practice. Comparatively, both typologies are inchoate in their affect and subsequent benefit to teachers. Given these methodological gaps, inquiry-oriented feedback, for the purpose of this exercise, is the line of best fit.

Donnelly and Fitzmaurice (2011) credit feedback gained through the structured analysis of microteaching to help teachers in sense-making. Through supervised self-analysis teachers engage in what Cressey and Boud (2006) term “productive reflection.” Productive reflection, Donnelly and Fitzmaurice (2011) conclude, “is focused not only on the individual independent learner; it engages with the context and purpose of work and with the imperative that reflection in such settings cannot be an individual act if it is to influence work that takes place with others” (p. 344). Van Manen (1990) further argues that “the experience of reflecting on past pedagogical experiences enables [practitioners] to enrich and make more thoughtful . . . future pedagogical experiences” (p. 205). Self-analysis helps teachers to engender a usable consciousness as it relates to their behaviors and dispositions toward teaching. These analyses carry great weight in helping teachers to rethink, assign meaning to, reassess, and respond to elements of their practice. Given this, sense-making is key to the changing behavior, and ultimately translates to greater teacher efficacy and higher student achievement.



Given the literature, I propose feedback offered through microteaching is a viable means of providing teachers with the adequate opportunities to critically reflect on their teaching practice. This method provides prompted and structured ways for principals to provide substantive feedback to teachers, and to create opportunities for principals and teachers to engage in collaborative goal-setting that will prompt professional improvement. The following section will present discussion of the role of professional development in schools, and more specifically a cross-cultural critique of professional development among U.S. schools and their global counterparts. Subsequent discussion is rooted in the assumption that professional development is central to the effective function of schools and to the effective development of teachers. This proposition further operationalizes the discussion of microteaching as a job-embedded tool for the development of teachers.

### **Professional Development: Random Acts of Improvement**

Presumptively, in the discussion of the function and positionality of principals as professional developers within their communities of practice, it is critical to first present discussion of the role of professional development in schools. But often, schools rely on “random acts of improvement” (Berhardt, 2006, p. 30) as educators, school leaders, and policymakers broker the success of schools; or so is the prognosis of the Public Consulting Group as it relates to schools and professional development. In this “pursuit of marginal improvements” (Davis, 1996, p. 201) school leaders are overwhelmingly missing the mark. While educators, school leaders, and policymakers recognize the impact of professional development on teacher performance, significant shortcomings

with professional development continue to imperil school achievement. The literature is profuse with recommendations to improve the success of professional development opportunities in schools and yet overwhelmingly go unheeded. This section will highlight the importance of professional development in schools, illuminate the criticality of the principal's role in facilitating the "right fit" for their school organizations, and comparatively critique the performance of U.S. schools to that of their global counterparts, offering recommendations for an alternative model of a job-embedded, principal-led professional development model.

It is widely recognized in the literature that professional development is critical to the success of teachers, and is noted as an indicator for increased student achievement (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Elmore, 1997; Little, 1993), teacher performance (Bandura, 1993, 1997; Goddard et al., 2004; Ross, 1998; Tschannen-Moran, Wolfolk; Hoy, & Hoy, 2001), and overall school performance (Mizell, 2010). Professional development has been an organizational touchstone for teachers in the U.S., especially those in low-performing schools. Since the passing of Title I legislation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965), which requires low-performing schools to earmark a tithe of federally allotted dollars for the express purpose of developing teachers, U.S. school have focused great attention and prolific expense on the professional development of teachers. Great criticism centers this legislation given that in its fifty year history, low-performing schools continue to persist. The question remains, "after the allocation of nearly \$13.9 billion in 2008 alone, reaching over half of the public schools in the country and almost 17 million students," can the

U.S. sustain continued prolific spending on professional development that is underwhelmingly successful, at best? (Weinstein et al., 2009, p. 1).

Moreover, the additional allocation of funds under the “federal economic stimulus bill (the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 or ARRA), which parceled an additional \$13 billion,” Olson, Doherty, and Staesina (2003) estimate some 23,812 schools have not made adequate progress and at least 5,200 more schools are in need of improvement. Conservatively, this translates to nearly 30,000 marginal schools in the United States (p. 18). *The solution?*—more legislation. Race to the Top (U.S. Department of Education, 2009) earmarked \$4.35 billion dollars for school improvement, a significant leg of which was mandated to be apportioned for professional and leadership development. The evidence is clear—the allocation of funds alone does not remedy the challenges that imperil low-performing schools. The literature challenges the functionality of professional development programs in schools and makes stentorian recommendations for implementation at the school level. Twenty-first century principals, as leaders of learning, must take heed.

Two points are clear, first, the history of federal aid in the U.S. has shown little evidence of solving the ills facing U.S. schools through teacher development. Second, principals must not rely on external resources, people, or programs to improve the quality of teaching and learning within their communities of practice. I propose that often times the reform solutions principals seek are found within their communities of practice. These solutions are not linked to funding sources at all, but are found in the direct development of teachers through site-based, job-embedded professional development.

These solutions are infixed within principals' attitudes and behaviors centering leadership, and are often job-embedded, meaning that they are found within the human and material resources that already exist in our schools rather than in overpriced external consulting firms, one-size-fits-all conferences, and commercial products. The literature reports relative heterogeneity in professional development models, and in 2003-04 nearly 92% of U.S. teachers reported participating in professional development that included: workshops, conferences, university courses for recertification, training sessions or observational visits to other schools (Darling-Hammond et al., p. 19).

Despite teachers' widespread participation in professional development opportunities, largely precipitated by increasingly stringent state certification standards, research cites that the lion's share of professional development for teachers occurs episodically and in isolation. Though droves of teachers across the nation report participating in professional development opportunities related to the vocation, few deem it satisfactory. In a 2003-04 SASS study researchers determined teachers to be largely dissatisfied with their rating of professional development, with less than 60% of respondents "finding content-related learning opportunities useful . . . and fewer than half found the professional development they received in other areas useful" (2003-04 SASS Teacher Questionnaire, as cited in Darling-Hammond et al., 2009, p. 21). Despite access to periodic professional development, teachers agree that effective professional development must be contiguous, job-embedded, and specific to the needs of their learning communities (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). Additional research illuminates flaws in traditional professional development citing the strong correlation between the

duration of time spent participating in professional development opportunities, the quality of their design, and the frequency of teachers' participation in developmental activities.

Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) suspect,

While many teachers get a day or two of professional development on various topics each year, very few have the chance to study any aspect of teaching for more than two days. Most of their professional learning does not meet the threshold need to produce strong effects on practice or student learning. (p. 20)

Vital sense-making gleaned from more intensive developmental opportunities are antithetical to the results found by researchers whose current appraisal of professional development for teachers limn it as poorly designed, episodic, and depthless (Little, 1997). Overwhelmingly researchers highlight the positive relationship between the duration of professional development and its subsequent impact on student achievement.

In a national study, researchers found:

Fifty-seven percent of teachers received fewer than two days (16 hours) of professional development on the content of the subjects they taught . . . Only 23 percent of teachers reported that they had received 33 hours or more (4 days) of professional development on the content of the subjects they taught. . . . Fewer than 10 percent experienced more than 24 hours of professional development . . . on content or pedagogy during the year. (Garet et al., 2001, p. 920)

Policymakers are increasingly recognizing the impact more intensive, sustained professional development models have on student achievement and teacher efficacy. For instance, a clause of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 mandates all professional development funded through the legislation to include activities that “are not one-day or short-term workshops or conferences” (NCLB, 2001). Increased time allotted for teachers

to engage in quality professional development opportunities is critical to the success of U.S. teachers; yet generalizing a specific number of hours researchers caution is short-sighted. As with most things, quality trumps quantity—especially within the context of professional development. A MetLife Survey of the American Teacher (2012) estimated, “On average . . . effective programs were characterized by an average of 49 hours of training; yet the study’s authors cautioned against extrapolating the findings given the varying aims of the programs and the small sample sizes of participants” (Yoon, et al., 2007). However speculative the findings, increased time for professional development does not usurp the power of well-designed developmental opportunities; and the two should not be seen as mutually exclusive.

Unfortunately factors that stymie teachers’ ability to engage in contiguous professional development include, “the demands posed by daily teaching and other aspects of the reform that continue to absorb a bulk of teachers’ energy, thought, and attention” (McDiarmid, 1994). Growing demands of federal, state, and local high-stakes accountability measurers levy additional pressures on teachers’ ability to miss instructional time—even for the sake of professional development. Darling-Hammond (2009) cites,

From 2000-2004 there was sharp drop in the proportion of teachers who had the opportunity to observe classes in other schools—from 34 percent to 22 percent . . . While the percentage of teachers participating in workshops, conferences and training sessions decreased nearly five percent. (p. 19)

However speculative this claim, it is clear that well-designed professional development takes time, and for it to be optimally effective, may take several years (Loucks-Horsley et

al., 2003). These findings further support the case for contiguous, job-embedded professional development.

Looking to other sources for pragmatic exemplars of job-embedded professional development models requires an interdisciplinary, cross-cultural look into communities of practice outside the U.S. and within other industries. Comparatively, U.S. teachers receive far less professional development than their counterparts in other industries. Shanker (1993) illuminates how the high-performing, now defunct employees of Saturn Automotive spent nearly 5% (92 hours a year) of their fiscal year engaged in professional development. Shanker (1993) envisions a similar vision for educators:

Imagine what a training program like this would do for people trying to restructure their schools. Or, put another way, imagine trying to change things as basic as the culture of a school with a couple of days of in-service training a year and some hours stolen from class preparation periods. If it takes 600 courses [a central training group offers nearly 600 different courses] and 92 hours a year per employee to make a better automobile, it will take that and more to make better schools. And if we're not willing to commit ourselves to that kind of effort, we are not going to get what we want. (p. 3)

Shanker's (1993) poignant expression reverberates the thinking that new results in education will require innovative approaches. As Fine and Raack (1994) distill, "School change is the result of both individual *and* organizational development" (p. 2).

Practitioners in U.S. schools must take note of the body of comparative research on the professional development of teachers in higher-performing industrialized nations.

Nations including Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Denmark, Finland, India, Norway, and Switzerland routinely outpace U.S. schools on the Programme for International Student Assessment exam (PISA). Comparatively, their teachers engage in exponentially higher

rates of professional development than U.S. teachers. The literature reveals the culture of professional development of teachers in high achieving countries is structured markedly different from U.S. schools. The most distinguishable structural verisimilitude among these high achieving nations lays in the amount of time these nations broker for professional development. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996) reports, "In most European and Asian countries, instruction takes up less than half of a teacher's working time" (as cited in Darling-Hammond et al., 2009, p. 19). The report estimates that teachers spend between 15–20 hours per week in job-embedded professional development that includes lesson preparation, curriculum writing, and collegial planning. "More than 85 percent of school in Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland provide time for professional development as part of teachers' average work day or week" (OECD, 2004). Comparable professional practices are exercised in Japan, Singapore, and South Korea, nations that routinely outpace U.S. schools.

Comparatively, the culture surrounding job-embedded professional development is emerging in U.S. schools. With the development of Professional Learning Communities (DuFour & Eaker, 1998; McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993; Newmann & Wehlage, 1995; Rosenholtz, 1989), the structure and function of job-embedded professional development is increasing in appeal in U.S. schools. The facts are clear, compared to their global competitors, U.S. teachers by contrast spend more time in direct contact with students. On average this translates to 1,080 hours of professional development per year (OCED, 2007), which accounts for nearly 80% of their total work-



life of U.S. teachers, compared to the 60% spent in direct instruction by their global counterparts. Paradoxically, U.S. teachers are engaged in an exhaustive Sisyphean campaign to teach U.S. students longer, and in greater isolation, than their global counterparts, all at the expense of gaining the valuable job-embedded professional development needed to perform more efficaciously.

Point distilled, professional development for U.S. teachers can no longer be performed in episodic isolation, or be reduced to a single-event conference or in-service. Effective professional development must be contiguous, job-embedded, and supplanted within the daily work-lives of U.S. teachers. Policymakers, school leaders, and educators must collectively broker a paradigm shift in thinking as it relates to professional development. The heterogeneity of collaborative planning, PLCs, in-services, site-based trainings, workshops, university partnerships, study groups, action research, seminars, coaching, and for the purpose of this exercise, principal-led microteaching, are all viable tools of professional development. Principals do not have moderate influence over school culture, they shape it. To this end, principals must marshal teachers and support staff in engaging creating professional development that is “sustained, coherent and takes place during the school day and... is viewed as a part of a teacher’s professional responsibilities” (Wei et al., 2009, p. 3). Only through these measures will U.S. teachers gain the momentum necessary to close the ever-expanding achievement gaps on the global landscape. Ultimately, as DuFour and Marzano (2011) hold, “the challenge confronting public education is not recruiting more good people to an ineffective system,

but rather creating powerful systems that allow ordinary people to achieve success” (p. 19).

This following section operationalizes the theoretical framework for discussion of microteaching as a tool for professional development, drawing from the body of theoretical literature on reflective practice and sense-making, and presents discussion of the expanded role and function of principals through microteaching.

### **Principals as Clinical Supervisors of Teaching and Learning**

Sergiovanni and Starrat (1983) in their discussion of the traditional scope of supervision describe principals engaging in an expanded view of instructional monitoring called clinical supervision. Clinical supervision, as they describe it, entails leadership behaviors that include both supervising and coaching teachers. Clinical supervision offers “an in-class support system designed to deliver . . . assistance directly to the teacher . . . to bring about changes in classroom operation and teacher behavior” (p. 299). Whereas supervision alone denotes inspection and evaluation, clinical supervision juxtaposes coaching and structured supervision to promote teacher efficacy. Within the gestalt of twenty-first century principal leadership, clinical supervision is critical in its offering of varied approaches in supporting teachers.

Veenman (1996) describes coaching as “a form of in-class support to help teachers enhance and renew their craftsmanship on the basis of systematic reflection on their professional practice” (p. 7). Coaching, ostensibly, is about building capacity in teachers through structured and prompted ways of support, while supervising and evaluating teachers are exercises linked to monitoring teacher performance. For

principals, coaching is a leadership disposition that is not often readily displayed. More specifically, for principals trained in the classical-management school of leadership, coaching is an activity antithetical to the arsenal of leadership behaviors and dispositions often practiced by these leaders. Nidus and Sadler (2011) add to the discussion, suggesting that “coaching is built on deep analysis of teacher and learning—and on the assumption that the ultimate purpose of improving instructional practice is to improve . . . achievement” (p. 31), which unarguably is achievement for students *and* teachers. Coaching, for principals, crystallizes the non-evaluative stance that teacher research literature argues teachers need to grow professionally (Bacon & Spear, 2003; Costa & Garmston, 1994; Garmston & Dyer, 1999). Nidus and Sadler (2011) elaborate, arguing that “even in schools fortunate enough to have a curriculum coach, the principal . . . must be the epicenter of school change” (p. 31). In taking the steps to achieve this capacious task, the skill of probing is a key mechanism in coaching. This section foundationalizes inquiry-based techniques as a means of coaching, for principals, and illuminates how this approach was used as a tool of inquiry in this study. The following section also presents discussion of the principal as an inquiry-oriented leader, presenting a theoretical discussion of the role and its origins, along with pragmatic implications for present leaders.

### **Inquiry-oriented Leadership**

An inquiry-oriented approach to leadership, as outlined in the article, *Beyond Managerialism: Inquiry-based leadership in an education system*, Reid (2005) makes the case that twenty-first century leaders must use inquiry-based practices to “investigate the

effects of practice . . . and to question their routine practices and assumptions” (p. 11).

Reid distills his point, validating the criticality of inquiry-based leadership as a practice for leading schools.

If the task of educators is to develop in children and young people the learning dispositions and capacities to think critically, flexibly and creatively, then educators too must possess and model these capacities. If this argument is accepted then it follows that educational leadership involves fostering conditions that support and promote inquiry. (Reid, 2005, pp. 11–12)

Such is the case for this study that seeks to employ an inquiry-oriented approach to offering teachers feedback through microteaching.

Reid (2005) foundationalizes this argument by suggesting that principals must shift the leadership paradigm from managerially centered leadership to adopt a more site-based approach to analyzing and remedying school-based issues, namely those centering teacher performance and student achievement. He explains:

One alternative to this dominant approach is to establish an education system that organizes its practices upon and around inquiry and research. This means moving from the well-worn path of producing and imposing products as a response to new challenges, to an approach that focuses on the strengthening of professional capacity and agency. This does not mean that educational resources and policies are not needed. Rather it suggests that these should be responsive to the insights and issues that emerge from a process of inquiry and research. (Reid, 2005, p. 12)

Summarily, Reid (2005) posits that principals must adopt site-based solutions in managing schools. Moreover, these context-bound approaches are often more effective than the commercial programs and one-size-fits-all professional development opportunities that many principals rely on for the continuous development of their

communities of practice. As educators and principals well know, these external resources have their place, but are not panaceas in solving school-based issues, nor in promoting teacher efficacy. These programs are far from the proverbial ruby slippers that principals can simply click to be whisked away to higher achievement; rather, they are mere tools principals can use in their journey there. As Glinda the Good Witch presciently eluded in her bequeathal of the slippers to Dorothy, “There they are, and there they’ll stay!”; so too are the problems principals face in governing schools. The demands of bolstering and maintaining student and teacher achievement are as universal as they are ubiquitous, and like Dorothy and her motley comrades discovered near the end of their journey, the solutions to solving these problems are often found within. So, as the mantra resounds, “there *is* no place like home” as it relates to finding solutions in schools, and more acutely, finding homespun solutions to improve teaching and learning. Principals must cultivate teachers using a mélange of proven approaches to enhance, as needed, and to support, as required.

As Reid (2005) suggests, inquiry-based leadership, shifts the leadership paradigm from managerialism to collaborative leadership through coaching, and in the case of this exercise, coaching through probing. Bacon and Spear (2003) opine in *Adaptive Coaching: The Art and Practice of a Client-Centered Approach to Performance Improvement*,

Albert Einstein said, “I have no special talents. I am only passionately curious.” Although not intended as such, this quotation describes the finest coaches. They are passionately curious about the people they are helping, and they exercise their curiosity by asking probing questions. A good question can open a closed door. It can stir people’s memories; stimulate them to think about things in ways they’ve

never thought about them before; and provoke insight and change by causing them to examine their aspirations, motivations, choices, assumptions, priorities, and behavior. (p. 166)

For principals this approach proves to be notably valuable. Questions are indispensable in tooling coaching principals with the right information to make prescriptions, understand underlying assumptions to clarify misgiving, and to mitigate concerns. Naguib Mahfouz offers sage thinking regarding the power of probing: “You can tell whether a man is clever by his answers. You can tell whether a man is wise by his questions.” This trend of coaching is not new; in fact, Socratic, Platonic, and Aristotelian coaching models are some of the oldest and most proven methods of coaching that date back some 2,500 years. In particular, Gross’s (2002) description of Socratic typology distills the method used in this case.

Socrates was the man who asked questions. He does not offer us *his* insight, conclusions, or tenets. Rather, he interrogates us about *ours*—and provokes us to think things through, consider alternatives, and sometimes make surprising discoveries. (p. 12)

This inquiry-oriented approach then, I offer, is a pragmatic touchstone by which principals can juxtapose their coaching. Through use of semi-structured and open-ended questions, principals encourage teachers to “provide expansive answers . . . that can help [teachers] explore themselves and their motivations more deeply, or challenge and provoke them to question their own perspective” (Bacon & Spear, 2003, p. 167). Coaching principals must subordinate the power of their authoritative role as principal and yield their authority of experience as former teachers to effectively engage in the

coaching of teachers. The authority of principals' experience as former teachers is valuable, yet within the context of coaching may not always be well received. To become more effective teachers mustn't rely on the narratives of principals chronicling the war-stories of their heyday as teachers, rather, teachers, through coaching, must come to their own truths. If this assumption is true, revisiting Glinda's exemplar from *The Wizard of Oz*, principals must guide teachers on their journey, not dominate it. Socrates, in Plato's *Protagoras*, captures the pith of this point holding, "[The] way toward truth is to ask the right questions." Juxtaposing this intellectual typology onto the practice of the leadership qua the principalship may appear unorthodox—even heretical—but as it relates to the observation, coaching, and supervision of teachers, the investment principals make in the *human* resource of twenty-first century teachers will require new and innovative attitudes, behaviors, and dispositions as they relate to leadership.

### **Theory of Sense-making**

The power of reflection creates the space for personal and professional growth and development. Principals bear the onus of marshaling sense-making for teachers within their communities of practice. "The theory of sense-making in organizations suggests that people make retrospective sense of unexpected and disruptive events through an ongoing process of action, selection and interpretations" (Weick, 1995, as cited in Dougherty & Drumheller, 2006, p. 217). Making sense of their strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement, Weick (1995, 2001) suggests, affects future sense-making. "While some argue that sense-making is purely cognitive, emphasis on the role of emotions in the sense-making process" cannot be ignored (Dougherty &

Drumheller, 2006, p. 217). This clarifies why poor or minimal feedback can be fatalistic to teachers and further validates why principals facilitating microteaching must be coaches as well as evaluators.

Sense-making is an interdisciplinary approach to professional development introduced to organizational studies by Karl Weick, who explored the complexities of social dynamics within an organization that lead to the creation of situational understanding and direction (Weick, 1995). According to Weick (1995) sense-making involves the creation of shared meaning and shared experiences that guide organizational decision making. Sense-making involves the process of people noticing and extracting specific cues from the environment to create new modes of understanding that subsequently inform future decisions. For example, revisiting the scenario in which my principal's note about the importance of time resulted in me purchasing a digital timer. From that one social cue I was able to extract the following meaning—"Time is important to my teaching. So much so I always need to be aware of it. Let me buy a timer to ensure that I am always conscious of how I am spending it." These usable ideas were products of sense-making through principal feedback. The sense-making gained from this critical moment would go on to inform subsequent years of teaching, and now, as an administrator, is a situational awareness, or, productive reflection, that continues to inform my work with teachers.

Sense-making incorporates insights drawn from philosophy, sociology, and social psychology, sharing transdisciplinary literature and epistemological perspectives. Sense-making informs the discussion of microteaching and feedback in that sense-making is the



evidence of acquired knowledge and new insights. It is widely accepted within the organizational studies literature as the activity of using information adaptively to inform future practice. In short, sense-making is how members of an organization, in this case, teachers, use information gained from feedback, to inform their practice, and to make sense of ambiguous scenarios. For teachers, substantive feedback gained through microteaching, accompanied by subsequent guidance and supervision from principal facilitators elicits new levels of understanding as it relates to the practice of teaching. Weick (1995) argues that the social dynamics of organizational processes are based on sense-making. This becomes relevant for teachers who overwhelmingly cite welcoming guidance from principals, yet do not receive it.

Sense-making is further informed by the discussion of the theory of productive reflection, which suggests that reflection becomes the catalyst for professional development. "Sense-making is also prospective in the sense that it is made retrospectively and affects future sense making" (Weick, 1995). Sense-making has the potential to clarify misgivings for retrospective and prospective analysis of practice. Sense-making then is both reflective and agential in prompting change in the professional praxes of teachers through microteaching. Sense-making leads to self-regulation, and in turn, self-regulation to self-efficacy. Sense-making foundationalizes what Weick (1995) and Sutcliffe (2001) term a "workable level of understanding that guides action" which "involves the process of people noticing and extracting specific cues from the environment and then contextually interpreting those cues according to certain held beliefs, mental models, rules, procedures and stories" (Leedom, 2001, p. 10).

Summarily, the sense-making that takes place within the context of principal-teacher post-evaluation conferences and on the pages of informal learning walks, must be structured, routine, and most importantly, be engendered through the neutral ground of reciprocal discourse between principals and teachers. It is on this negotiatory plane that principals and teachers engage in career changing discourses that center learning, thinking, problem-solving, sense-making, and ultimately, leadership. It is in these spaces that principals and teachers work in concert to symbiotically disrupt the status quo, to evoke sense-making and ultimately improve praxis.

Through these principal-led methods teachers will habituate sense-making as a part of their praxis. This heuristic theoretical approach, “serves to aid in learning, discovery or problem-solving by experimental methods,” “utilizing self-educating techniques to improve performance” (Kiss, 2006, p. 302). This approach structuralizes both processes and methods that enable reflection to flourish both introspectively and prospectively. As Flores asserts, “an organization’s results are determined through webs of human commitments, born in webs of human conversations” (as cited in Brown & Isaacs, 1997, p. 2). Through the heuristic approach, teachers are marshaled into deeper levels of sense-making and ultimately ushered into deeper levels of professional meaning. Within “the webs of human commitments, born in webs of human conversations” between teachers and principals, professional growth occurs (Flores, as cited in Brown & Isaacs, 1997, p. 2). In those stimulatory discourses teachers and principals engage in discursive practice. Metaphorically, sense-making theory can be depicted as rungs on the ladder teachers climb in their ascent up Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, bound toward the

apex—self-actualized teaching. If this assumption is true, principals' feedback is foundational to teacher efficacy, and soberly, if teachers fail to reach self-actualized teaching, a strong argument can be made that principals, as leaders of learning, have missed the mark.

As the aforementioned writers suggests, the literature is rife with criticism concerning the quality of cogent feedback offered to teachers by principals, who as DuFour & Marzano (2011), argue, must be “leaders of learning.” Given this, principals as leaders of learning must engage in contiguous discursive practice with teachers, to offer cogent formative feedback. Tunstall and Gipps (1996) offer additional literature to explore the criticality of principals offering formative feedback to teachers. They distinguish two major arcs of feedback in the literature—descriptive and evaluative. Tunstall and Gipps's (1996) typology offers an additional perspective through which to explore formative feedback.

Descriptive feedback within principal-led microteaching is feedback that is offered to the learner that describes the steps teachers prospectively take in order to move forward in the learning process. This feedback, as its moniker elicits, describes the steps teachers must take to improve. This type of feedback is intended to tell the learner what they must to do to improve their practice. Descriptive feedback is intended to be guiding feedback, and prescriptive, and has the potential to be subjective (Brookhart, 2007). Comparatively, evaluative feedback is less prescriptive. This feedback is a summation of what was observed, and nothing more. Using this mode of feedback, principals may merely record their findings without offering critical recommendations that guide

teachers toward more efficacious practice. Comparatively, both typologies are inchoate in their affect, and subsequent benefits to teachers. Given these methodological gaps, inquiry-oriented feedback, for the purpose of this exercise, is the line of best fit.

Donnelly and Fitzmaurice (2011) credit feedback gained through the structured analysis of microteaching to help teachers in sense-making. Through supervised self-analysis teachers engage in what Cressey and Boud (2006) term “productive reflection.” Productive reflection, Donnelly and Fitzmaurice (2011) conclude, “is focused not only on the individual independent learner; it engages with the context and purpose of work and with the imperative that reflection in such settings cannot be an individual act if it is to influence work that takes place with others” (p. 344). Van Manen (1990) further argues that “the experience of reflecting on past pedagogical experiences enables [practitioners] to enrich and make more thoughtful . . . future pedagogical experiences” (p. 205). Self-analysis helps teachers to engender a usable consciousness as it relates to their behaviors and dispositions toward teaching. These analyses carry great weight in helping teachers to rethink, assign meaning to, reassess, and respond to elements of their practice. Given this, sense-making is key to the changing behavior and ultimately translates to greater teacher efficacy and higher student achievement. “Key to sense-making is the idea that organizational members make sense of disruptions to the organizing process” (Dougherty & Drumheller, 2006, p. 216).

Throughout the literature sense-making has been cited under various names to include, incongruous events (Starbuck & Milliken, 1988), interruptions (Mandler, 1984), and unmet expectations (Jablin & Kramer, 1998). Despite the varied monikers, there is

common recognition that sense-making occurs when the flow of work is disrupted. The theory of sense-making in organizations suggests that people make retrospective sense of unexpected and disruptive events through an ongoing process of action, selection, and interpretation (Weick, 1995). Teachers acquire new understandings about their praxis as a result of the feedback, reflection, and analysis gleaned through the microteaching protocol. This reflection and analysis are critical to their sense-making, and become the impetus for subsequent change in their praxis. These shifts in teacher behavior are cognitive in nature, and are critical to professional meaning-making. Sense-making is analogous to Maslow's level of self-actualized behavior. While some argue that sense-making is purely cognitive (Fineman, 1996), Weick (1995) emphasizes the role of emotions in the sense-making process. Emotions, like those experienced subsequent to the feedback, or lack thereof, offered from my principals, Weick (1995) says, "are involved in both the commencement and outcome of sense making" (p. 45). Processing the emotional link teachers have to their practice is a far more complex and dimensional activity than teachers processing feedback from the sterile pages of evaluation appraisals. If learning, as Vygotsky (1978) holds, is a social practice, then professional sense-making is too. Summarily, sense-making should engender new levels of understanding among those in the community of practice, among teachers and principals.

### **Microteaching**

If sense-making is the mode of clarifying organizational understanding, microteaching is the lens through which the teaching is captured. Given this assumption, Allen and Ryan (1969) conceive, "the continuous education of teachers must be fostered

by new attitudes and new approaches” (p. 73). This recommendation by the developers of microteaching in 1963 still holds true some 50 years later. The literature on teacher development is replete with criticism on the state of professional development in schools, yet is routinely ineffectual in articulating methods and processes to this end. A litany of scholars conceptualize new framings for how to analyze the practice of teaching, framing it as “as an art” (Sarason, 1999), “a social practice” (D’Eon, Overgaard, & Harding, 2000), “a science” (Makedon, 1989), “a transgressive act” (hooks, 1994), and “a subversive activity” (Postman & Weingartner, 1969). Whatever view held among the vast and divergent framings of teaching, one fact is clear; it is a dynamic and ever-changing vocation that requires continuous professional development. Even after the pre-service teaching experience, practicum, fulfilling of licensure requirements, and initial years of in-service teaching, the literature illuminates the imperative for teachers to engage in contiguous professional development (Flowers, & Mertens, 2003; Guskey, 2000; Richardson, 2003; Sparks, 1997; Sparks & Hirsh, 1997). Greater yet, the literature informs this investigative exercise, which proposes that principals as leaders of learning, through microteaching, can engage in the work necessary to contiguously develop teachers.

Dwight Allen, Stanford University professor, and developer of microteaching, sought to use microteaching as a training instrument to develop pre-service teachers enrolled in Stanford University’s teacher-education program in the mid-1960s. Microteaching is a “constructive teacher-training technique” (Allen & Ryan, p. viii.), that in its original process created simulated teaching opportunities that allowed pre-service

teachers to focus on condensed, objective-specific teaching skills with student participants. These “microteaching clinics,” as they were termed, were accompanied by a series of reflective dialogues between the pre-service teacher, teaching fellows, master teachers and student participants. Immediate reflection and analysis of the simulated teaching experience followed in what were termed, “post-mortem” sessions. Later iterations of microteaching employed the use of videotaping for an additional mode of analysis.

The concept of microteaching was developed to both refine and revamp the teacher training protocol used in Stanford’s teacher-education department. Ryan and Allen (1969) historicize conditions that led to the need for microteaching:

The liberal arts graduates who had entered the Stanford teacher-education program were reluctant to undertake serious study of the teaching-learning process. Most of the student had come for one reason: State laws required a teaching credential for school service. Stanford was a prestigious institution, and hence the study of education at Stanford was simply the least unattractive of unwelcome alternatives. The staff of the teacher-education program was understandably concerned that such attitudes might severely limit the amount that students learned in the program . . . To jar the students from their complacency [faculty] designed the demonstration lessons [later termed, microteaching] (p. iv)

The earliest uses of microteaching were rooted in teacher training and professional development, and some fifty years later, the method still carries great utility in the way of teacher training and as a tool of inquiry.

First, microteaching offers the use of self-viewed teaching that sensitizes and informs teachers of the specific teaching behaviors that require improvement. Through this system of reflection and self-analysis teachers make sense their practice and

pedagogical decision-making. In the context of microteaching as a professional development tool, teachers are afforded the opportunity to “analyze footage of their teaching in structured and prompted ways” (Donnelly & Fitzmaurice, 2011, p. 335). Comparatively, without use of videotaped observations teachers are not able to relive their teaching experience as participant observers. As Yorke (2003) cites, “feedback is normally given vividness by the use of video-recording equipment” (p. 45) for the purpose of self-analysis. Young and Young (1968) add,

Videotape recording provides the supervisors the means to provide discrimination training. As the videotape progresses, he can reinforce the teacher for each instance of the behavior by stopping the tape and telling the teachers, “You did that well, let’s watch it again.” He then replays that portion. Or, if the supervisor has noted in advance when he wants to reinforce the teacher, he can stop the tape and say, “Now watch how well you respond to this student.” (p. 189)

Through this engagement of teachers in “structured and prompted ways,” principals purposefully guide teachers in the important practice of reflection (Donnelly & Fitzmaurice, 2011). More acutely, microteaching juxtaposes feedback and clinical supervision, offering teachers “the opportunity for self-evaluation; and immediate guidance in areas of demonstrated shortcomings or previously identified problem areas by the participant themselves, so that the locus of control in the session always remains with them” (Donnelly & Fitzmaurice, 2011, p. 336). Both the value and criticality of professional reflection have gained wide acceptance across disciplines. The importance of reflective practice is a prominent point of interest throughout the body of educational leadership literature (Schön, 1983, 1987; Sergiovanni, 2001; Thorpe, 2004). Race (2011) has suggested that establishing the climate and structure of microteaching provides



routine opportunities for practitioners to “learn about oneself and others; to build confidence; to increase awareness of student learning; to practice how to receive positive and negative feedback; and to develop collegiality” (Race, 2011, p. 336). Given this, the congress between principals and teachers through inquiry-oriented microteaching becomes substantive and reciprocal. As principals probe teachers, questioning their motivations, noticings, perceptions, and decision-making, they must tool themselves to effectively guide teachers to the human and material resources they require to become more efficacious practitioners. Microteaching is a facilitative mechanism in this process.

### **Microteaching as a Tool of Inquiry**

If necessity is the mother of invention then [inquiry] is its father - Bhadu.

From its earliest iterations, developers of microteaching sought to inform and analyze the supervision of teachers through simulated microteaching clinics. The process provided,

teachers with a practice setting for instruction in which the normal complexities of the classroom [were] reduced and in which the teacher received a great deal of feedback. To minimize the complexities of the normal teaching encounter . . . the length of the lessons were limited, in addition to class size. (Allen & Ryan, 1969, p. 2)

The delimiting of time became a critical feature to the efficiency, effectualness, and appeal of the microteaching instrument. “Microteaching is a focused instrument . . . the practice environment of microteaching allows teachers to work on the acquisition of specific skills; extraneous concerns can be shut out” (Allen & Ryan, 1969, p. 5).

In early iterations of the process, faculty found that microteaching sessions were becoming unwieldy due to the length of time of each session. Overwhelmingly, faculty began to note that scheduled microteaching sessions were exceeding the 20 minutes allotted by faculty. This became logistically problematic, first, for the sake of efficient scheduling efforts within the department, and second, the volume of tape and transcripts that students generated became difficult for researchers manage. Rather than focusing on components of the lesson, faculty and students were reviewing the lesson as a whole. Emending the process, faculty began delimiting microteaching variables such as time, class size, and skills to be observed in an effort to maximize the potency of the microteaching experience. Rather than facilitating hour-long microteaching clinics, teaching fellows identified specific skills to be observed, and the time for the observations were condensed. Allen and Ryan (1969) justify this manipulation of variables within the microteaching process holding, “to minimize the complexities of the normal teaching encounter” variables were limited (p. 2). The method of delimiting variables within the process of microteaching continues in contemporary iterations of microteaching. Allen and Ryan (1969) assert,

Microteaching is intuitively appealing as a way of providing practice in teaching. It has come to be a convenient research locus which dramatically simplifies the logistics of investigating certain teaching skills and other learning variables. It is a means of highlighting teaching problems by reducing the complexity of teaching situations. (p. ix)

Microteaching in this form helped “to focus attention on teaching behavior” by providing “a setting for controlled practice” (Allen & Ryan, 1969, p. xiii).

“The concept of microteaching has never been a static one. It continues to grow and change and develop both in focus and format” (Allen & Ryan, 1969, p. vii). Within five years of its development, microteaching had become a major force in the training of pre-service teachers, as evidenced by more than 53% of all teacher education programs in the United States citing use of variations of microteaching as a standard operating procedure by the late 1960s (Allen & Ryan, 1969). In its earliest iterations microteaching was used within university teacher-education programs as a tool in the development of pre-service teachers, yet it has been strongly argued that the uses of microteaching are far more utilitarian than for pre-service teachers alone. With compelling evidence to support use of microteaching for in-service teachers, microteaching clinics gained appeal as a tool for the development of in-service teachers (Amobi, 2005; Hawkey, 1995; Kpanja, 2001; Wilkinson, 1996). “Microteaching . . . can be applied at various pre-service and in-service stages in the professional development of teachers” (Allen & Ryan, 1969, p. 1). The merits of microteaching for the training of in-service teachers is proven; however, the question remains, within the context of formal evaluations, which are linked to performance appraisals and job security, is microteaching a viable tool to facilitate principal-led professional development?

For the discussion of microteaching as a viable tool for the development of in-service teachers to be legitimated, five propositions of microteaching must be acknowledged:

1. “Microteaching is real teaching. The scenarios are constructed”; however, the teaching facilitates in microteaching sessions is authentic (Allen & Ryan, 1969, p. 2)

2. "Microteaching lessens the complexities of normal classroom teaching. Class size, scope of content, and time are all reduced" (Allen & Ryan, 1969, p. 2).
3. "Microteaching focuses on training for the accomplishment of specific tasks. These tasks may be the practice of instructional skills, the practice of techniques of teaching, the mastery of certain curricular materials, or the demonstration of teaching methods" (Allen & Ryan, 1969, p. 2).
4. "Microteaching allows for the increased control of practice. In the practice setting . . . methods of feedback and supervision . . . can be manipulated" (Allen & Ryan, 1969, p. 2).
5. "Microteaching" embeds an inherent "feedback dimension in teaching. Immediately after teaching a micro-lesson, the trainee engages in a critique of his performance. To give him a maximum insight into his performance, several sources of feedback are at his disposal. With the guidance of a supervisor . . . he analyzes aspects of his own performance. The trainee and supervisor go over student responses that are designated to elicit reaction to specific aspects of his teaching. When the supervisor has videotape available, he can use videotape playbacks to help show the teacher how he performs and how he can improve" (Allen & Ryan, 1969, p. 3)

First, Ivey et al. (1968) cite microteaching as a viable method for continuous teacher development. The process of microteaching centralizes the importance of teachers as contiguous learners, emphasizing this quality as a key indicator of successful teaching (Fleming, 1999). Second, it is critical to distinguish the supervisory challenges linked to the training and development of pre-service teachers and their in-service counterparts. Allen and Ryan (1969) postulate,

To most teachers, supervision is an unpleasant word. One reason is that people tend to confuse supervision with evaluation. Even when supervision is disentangled from evaluation, it is rarely performed well. As currently practiced, supervision tends to be generalized in its approach to the teacher's performance, infrequent, and negative in tone. (p. 7)

Supervision for in-service teachers is often not supervision at all, but evaluation linked to job performance, career stability, and within many merit-based pay structures, financial gain.

The literature makes a strong argument that observations without effectual feedback are problematic. Given this, the primary question reemerges: *Can principals employ microteaching as an effectual tool in the development of teachers?* The structure and function of university teacher-preparation programs are far different from the structure of in-service teacher experiences, which may contribute to attitudes toward supervision and evaluation held by many in-service teachers and principals. University faculty offer formative feedback rather than evaluative creating collaborative structures to support student learning, and are cited as giving more frequent feedback than that received by their in-service counterparts (Brookfield, 1995; Kreber, 2005; Lyons, 2006). Undoubtedly, microteaching is a viable tool for the development of pre-service and in-service teachers alike however; the fact is, as the contexts for microteaching change, so must the discourse centering the dispositions and behaviors of those supervising teachers within those communities of practice. In the university setting, faculty, teaching fellows, and supervising teachers create the cadre of support for pre-service teachers, yet this is often not the case for in-service teachers. Supervision by principals is often not supervision at all, but evaluation. Thinking and behaviors centering principals' roles as evaluators must be challenged and reconceptualized if microteaching is to be a viable tool for teacher development. Moreover, the social contract between principals and teachers vis-à-vis supervision and evaluation, too, must be renegotiated for microteaching to be

successful. As comparative studies (Benton-Kupper, 2001; Jerich, 1989; Wilkinson, 1996) hold, microteaching prepares teachers to become more reflective practitioners, and that repeated exposure to microteaching encourages self-evaluation of self-perceptions and teaching behaviors (Subramaniam, 2006, p. 667). However, teachers are less apt to engage in the activity of microteaching if it is viewed as just another compulsory evaluative measure.

### **Microteaching as a Tool for Reflective Practice**

Gross-Davis (1993) lauded the use of video-aided microteaching as a method of self-analysis for teachers. Through this method teachers view footage of themselves, as participant observers. Gross-Davis (1993) explains, “Analyzing a recording of the dynamics of your classroom, you can check the accuracy of your perceptions of how well you teach, identify those techniques that work and those that need revamping” (p. 34). A litany of scholars have studied the merits of self-reflection on job performance (Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975; Grant, Franklin, & Langford, 2002; Ingram & Greer, 1992; Watson, Morris, Ramsey, Hickman, & Waddell, 1996) with findings to include—higher levels of self-consciousness, introspection, better overall performance in completing complex tasks, and a decreased rate of error making in completing complex tasks and “clarity of understanding of one's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors” (Grant et al., 2002, p. 821). Moore, Walsh, and Risquez (2007) elicit, “undertaking to look at yourself through other people’s eyes is a revealing and sometimes disturbing practice” (p. 15). Through microteaching teachers are equipped to do just that.

There is an emerging body of research on reflection within the context of teaching (Brookfield, 1995; Kreber, 2005, 2005; Lyons, 2006). Critical reflection is agential, helping the learner to describe experiences and analyze what they have learned from those experiences, equipping the learner with new thinking. This emergent thinking offers the learner a process of judgment by which to frame and respond to future experiences (Brookfield, 1995, as cited in Donnelly and Fitzmaurice, 2011). While Maddock, Pell, and Hargreaves (2006) argue that self-awareness is an essential tool for teachers and that reflective practice is essential in teachers' capacity to integrate and make sense of the self, "a crucial and perhaps overlooked element, that is incorporated within this expansive concept; the teachers' attentiveness to self-in-practice" (Warin et al., 2006, p. 243). However critical self-reflection is to professional practice, there are limitations. Moon (2000) illuminates flaws in self-reflection, citing that it has the potential to be unbalanced in perspective, being "too introspective and often uncontested" (p. 114). Given these assumptions, it is of key importance to provide multiple modes of feedback to support teachers as they "question assumptions and values" (Donnelly & Fitzmaurice, 2011, p. 338). Microteaching sessions "encourage open examination of teaching and provide opportunities for participants to make explicit the thinking underpinning their own practice as teachers" (Donnelly & Fitzmaurice, 2011, p. 338).

Benton-Kupper (2001) decries feedback that lacks specificity, calling for feedback that is both "constructive" and "supportive" in nature. Gess-Newsome and Lederman (1993) emphasize the need for substantive feedback on academic content, pedagogical methodology, and content knowledge, rather than on the superficiality of

teacher appearance and mannerism. This is a notable flaw of microteaching studies further explored by (Amobi, 2005; Brent & Thomson, 1996; Wilkinson, 1996) who found practitioners who use microteaching to neglect confronting the strengths and weaknesses of their microteaching performance in exchange for overemphasis on their physical appearance and mannerisms. It is critical for teachers to engage in an expanded use of microteaching that is not dominated by an interest in surface-level gesticulation, but of a research method that is more analytic, identifying with specificity, teachers' pedagogical strengths and weaknesses.

Equal to the impact of microteaching as a tool of inquiry, researchers expand the uses of microteaching as a professional development tool, asserting that microteaching is merely a mode, among a panoply of methods to deliver feedback. Microteaching then is simply a small cog in a greater machine, one geared on generating supportive, constructive, goal-oriented discourses centering teaching. Subramaniam (2006) posits, "It is claimed that multiple sources provide different angles for self-confrontation of a microteaching experience" (p. 667). Equally pertinent, a number of researchers contend that feedback must come from a variety of sources: videotape playback, clinical supervision, peers, supervisors and course instructors (Kpanja, 2001; Wilkinson, 1996). In short, teachers through supervised self-analysis vis-a-vis microteaching come to make sense of their practice. Principals as the brokers of learning must lead this charge. Summarily, microteaching is a tool, among a multiplicity of methods for principals to facilitate the reflective practice that promotes more effective teaching.



### Technical-Rational Theory

Classical technical-rational models are antithetical to the dispositions needed for principals employing microteaching as a developmental tool. For principals to be effective facilitators of microteaching, they must sway toward the end of the coaching pendulum, not the evaluative end. This retooling of leadership dispositions does require a paradigmatic shift in principals' thinking and functionality, and will require an even greater shift in the thinking and functioning of members within school organizations. If what Ogawa and Bossert (1995) hold is true, "The medium of leadership and the currency of leadership lie in the personal resources of people" (p. 40); thus, reinscribing this role vis-à-vis the principalship will require a new recipe for leadership—*equal parts coach and evaluator*. To conceptualize the principal as a microteaching coach requires a review and critique of the dominant theoretical view of the principalship, and offering of an expanded view of the principalship through microteaching.

Leadership is as much a behavioral characteristic as it is an organizational quality; and the two are never mutually exclusive. Selznick (1957) suggests that the ways we characterize leadership is key in understanding how we conceptualize organizations (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995, p. 39). For this assumption to be true, the discussion of leadership must be grounded in an understanding of technical-rational theory.

The principal is an ever-evolving post. From organizational head and authoritative administrator to the more contemporary conceptualization as a leader of learning, researchers continue to expand thinking in and around the idea of principal leadership. The classical technical-rational perspective emphasizes the locus of leadership within the

role of the leader, not in the behaviors and dispositions that qualify them as exemplars of leadership. This model centralizes the “authority of leadership” (Barnard, 1968, p. xxi.) in the person rather than as a systemic feature of the organization. Harary, Norman & Cartwright (1965) adds to the discussion, characterizing leadership as a form of control exerted over organization’s member in describing the role of school administrators. Thompson (1967) depicts leadership as hegemonic, hierarchical, and again, central to only those appointed, rather than distributive.

Technical-rational perspective elicits that “organizations exist to attain specific, predetermined goals” (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995, p. 41), formalizing rigid structures, procedures, and rules that “govern the behavior of members by precisely and explicitly prescribing roles and role relations” (Scott, 1992, as cited in Ogawa & Bossert, 1995, p. 41). For schools this equates to highly structured hierarchies where authority is centralized in the principal, and principal alone. This dominant theoretical perspective is the classical model of leadership, and juxtaposed to the DuFour and Marzano’s (2011) redaction of principals as leaders of learning is as flawed as it is outdated. The technical-rational perspective undergirds practices that subordinate democratized leadership. Leadership roles within school organizations must not be impermeable, but systemic, and exercised by all.

The technical-rational perspective gives way to rigid tropes of authoritarian dominance that has often guided public perception of the principalship. Storied accounts of grisly principals like the bat-wielding Joe Clark, or the arrogantly retaliatory fictitious Principal Vernon, from 80s cult classic, *The Breakfast Club*, pepper the perception of the

true characteristics needed to be effective, humane, principals. These divisive caricatures create narrow tropes of the principalship that are tyrannical, dogmatic and domineering.

Williams's (2009) pithy account captures the essence of this sentiment:

If you listen closely with your imagination, you can almost hear the click-click-click of the principal's heels as they tap across the shadows on the polished floors of the corridors. You may even hear the whispers of the students, and envision the fearful look of the teachers as they hush their classes in fear of the approaching doom. You may be able to imagine the scene, because, perhaps, you have lived it. It is possible that we could imagine scene after scene, starring the stereotypical principal. In one, the principal's voice booms across a noisy lunchroom and everyone freezes in fear. In another, the stiffly suited principal watches an active, involved classroom, crosses arms over belly, and glowers at the teacher. In another, the curtly worded note appears in the teacher's mailbox with the dreaded words, "See me." (Williams, 2009, p. 193)

Principals, as leaders of learning must *marshal* teachers into more efficacious practice, not *strong-arm* them into it. Teacher abuse by the intimidatory practices of principals has been the subject of wide range of study (Blase & Blase, 2003, 2006; Keashly et al., 1994; Neuman & Baron, 1998; Ryan & Oestreich, 1991), and speculatively may be undergirded by the boot-strap martyrdom of lone-wolf, technical-rational leaders who presumptively believe that leadership within their school organizations starts and ends in them. Glickman (2002) cautions, "Whenever one person defines himself or herself as the sole leader, provider, and catalyst for improved classroom learning, any school with more than 15 teaching faculty immediately confronts a lack of school-wide instructional focus and assistance" (p. 2). The dispositions required for twenty-first century principals increasingly delimit the leadership style of technical-rational principals. Lambert (2002) adds, "The days of the principal as the lone

instructional leader are over. We no longer believe that one administrator can serve as the instructional leader for an entire school without the substantial participation of other educators” (p. 37).

It is critical to revisit the core argument that twenty-first century principals must challenge classical models of authoritarian leadership to be effective. It is necessary to highlight the literature buttressing technical-rational leadership to expose its fractures. Juxtaposing technical-rational models of the principalship to a democratic, coaching model like the one proposed in this case study, is valuable in identifying exemplars for pragmatists, as well as those replicating this model within their respective communities of practice.

Additionally, it is worth noting that though short-sighted in its perspective as it relates to democratized leadership, the technical-rational perspective does align with the goal-orientated zeitgeist of the current era of accountability, and as such, must be revisited for theoretical and pragmatic value. Microteaching as a professional development tool dislocates the “authority of leadership” of the principal because it requires substantive congress between teachers and principals rather than relying on traditional, top-down methods of observation and evaluation. Inquiry-oriented microteaching as a tool of professional development deemphasizes the managerial authority of the principal and requires him to coach rather than evaluate. Through a series of probing and discursive dialogues through microteaching, principals marshal teachers into revealing relevant insights into their practice. Beatty (2001) distills this point citing, “Leaders who are sensitive to teachers needs for congruity and emotional understanding

in their professional relationships with their leaders can provide invaluable support and catalyze creativity which can benefit exponentially, the whole school community” (p. 36).

### **Microteaching vis-à-vis the Principalship**

“To train teachers initially—and then to maintain professional skill through a lifetime of service—is a tremendously complex task” (Allen & Ryan, 1969, p. 3). Tantamount to the requisite need for principals to effectively train teachers is the necessity for principals to engage in behaviors that distinguish them as “leaders of learning” (DuFour & Marzano, 2011). Microteaching in this case provides the stones to kill both birds.

Microteaching facilitated by principals requires a role shift from the authoritative evaluator, to dispositions that support cognitive coaching. This model that requires non-judgmental coaching, to encourage reflective practice, to guide teachers to self-directed learning (Costa & Garmston, 2002, p. 398). Microteaching is a constructivist teacher-training technique (Allen & Ryan, 1969), and as such, principals as leaders of learning must emulate the same constructivist supervisory behaviors if they are to develop constructivist teachers. These dispositions, highlighted by the *Midway College Teacher Education Report* (2009) hold, “The teacher leader seeks and continually refines teaching practices that communicate high expectations and generate enriched learning for all students . . . and collaborates in critical thinking for the purpose of instructional improvement” (p. 4). Ostensibly, constructivist pedagogues are developed by constructivist leaders. Microteaching is agential in helping principals to achieve this.

The concept of microteaching challenges classical-management models of leadership through the principalship, calling for changes in the supervisory habits of principals vis-à-vis microteaching. As Allen and Ryan (1969) assert, “The supervision that accompanies microteaching is highly specific” (p. 7), and comparatively, the literature cites teachers overwhelmingly report supervisor feedback is typically general and one-dimensional, often accompanied by check-lists and rating scales (Dunkleberger, 1982). On the contrary, microteaching’s use of the “component-skills approach emphasizes the acquisition of one skill at a time. This is particularly helpful . . . since by narrowing down activities he should engage in it makes his task much less complex and mystifying” (Dunkleberger, 1982, p. 23). For principals this means focusing on one skill at a time when supervising teachers. Dunkleberger (1982) prescribes that supervisors must define specific tasks to focus on during the microteaching process. Within the gestalt of microteaching, skills to be observed are variable to include: duration of time, frequency of microteaching sessions, skills to be observed, and class size used in the simulation. For Allen-Ryan (1969), “the component-skills approach greatly simplifies the training of [teachers]. It focuses the training of supervisors on specifics rather than on generalities” (p. 24). “Instead of the supervisors’ job being to deal with every problem as it presents itself, her job is to help teachers acquire the particular skills being trained” (p. 24). For principals, identifying skill deficits among teachers is where the real work of developing more efficacious teachers takes place. Rather than focusing on the lesson as a whole, principals take a functionalist approach in aiding teachers with developing one skill at a time. Under the supervision of coaching principals, the structured and

contemplative exercise of microteaching creates opportunities for teachers to strengthen their practice.

Though open to a wide range of variation microteaching, with the component-skills approach, narrows the acquisition of skills necessary to be a more efficacious practitioner. The approach immediately shifts the investigative aperture from gaze to glare, focusing principals' attention to specific skills, rather than on the generalities of a full lesson. Microteaching enables supervising principals to focus professional development on requisite skills with acute specificity, rather than on offering volumes of feedback on skills teachers may not need to develop. Microteaching as a site-based professional development tool can be designed to target specific, site-based needs. Subsequently, as Allen-Ryan (1969) hold,

the component-skills approach forces the school or teacher training institution to define which teaching skills it considers important. It clarifies the expectation of all concerned. It also enables the institution to make a start on the problem of evaluation in order to more readily gauge the success or failure of its training. (p. 25)

This reverberates and further reinforces literature supporting principals as leaders of learning. Lezotte (1991) proposes that in effective schools “there is a clearly articulated school mission through which the staff shares an understanding of and commitment to instructional goals, priorities, assessment procedures, and accountability” (p. 6), the onus of which rests on the shoulders of the principal. With microteaching the language and thinking about leadership changes. A paradigmatic shift must take place. We must see administrators not just as evaluators but as supervising principals prepared,

equipped, and willing to coach teachers—not just evaluate them. Principals must distinguish their role as leaders of *learning*, not of *people*, abandoning the classical-management perspective of solely observing and evaluating teachers. Rather, principals' supervisory role should be distinguished by a monitoring-modeling-coaching model, similar to the supervisory role of pre-service teachers and their cooperating teachers much like the original model intended. Only through challenging these tropes of leadership will principal-led microteaching be recognized for its utility as a professional development tool.

The discourse centering the change in leadership behaviors, assumptions, and dispositions is befitting. As early iterations of microteaching research conducted by Bandura and McDonald (1963) studied the effects of microteaching models in changing behavior. Befittingly, leadership behaviors for principals employing microteaching must change.

For microteaching to be successful principals must:

1. Use coaching methods in the supervision of teachers more routinely (Baker & Showers, 1984; Showers, 1983, 1983b, 1984).
2. Offer more formative feedback to teachers (Juwah et al., 2009; Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000).
3. Be willing to engage in observations that are non-evaluative (Anderson, 1986; Chowdhury, 2004; Glattorn & Holler, 1987; Shakeshaft, Nowell, & Perry, 1991).



4. Become better purveyors of content and pedagogical strategies necessary to improve teacher efficacy (DuFour & DuFour, 2002; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 1993).

### **Microteaching as a Pragmatic Tool**

Some 50 years ago Allen and Ryan (1969) and Olivero (1970) pointed to microteaching as an alternative mode of offering teachers feedback. “Microteaching provides a positive approach to supervision. The approach is entirely non-evaluative” (p. 7) emphasizing focus on the particularities of skills and objectives not the all-encompassing lesson. More contemporary literature continues to confirm the practice as a viable option, yet more recent literature abandons the use of microteaching in a clinical vacuum. An emerging core of researchers call for the expanded the use of microteaching, highlighting it within the context of evaluative systems similar to those used in traditional observation-evaluations conducted by principals. Danielson and McGreal (2000) call for microteaching to be “integrated within the context of evaluation systems, systems containing evaluative criteria, consisting of a number of instruments and procedures, to assess teaching” (p. 19). Danielson and McGreal (2000) add that “by placing evaluative criteria within an evaluative system evaluators,” in this case, principals,

can help teachers to focus attention on the importance of teaching and learning for students and teachers; to provide the means and the incentives for quality assurance, based on legitimate teaching standards; and to serve as the catalyst for encouraging and supporting professional learning through focused, collaborative activities. (p. 20)

Gitlin et al. (1999) equalize the argument claiming the need for evaluative systems and the use of microteaching as sound pragmatic methodology. “Adoption of an evaluation system with a focus on both evaluative criteria and evidence prevents the evaluation process from becoming a fact-finding mission where the identification of discrete teaching skills becomes the target for evaluation” (Gitlin et al., 1999, p. 754). Additional studies support use of microteaching within the context of evaluation systems citing that the need to provide evidence for criterion within evaluative systems satisfies the need for detailed feedback rather than general feedback (Benton-Kupper, 2001). Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993, 1999) and Gitlin et al. (1999) also endorse microteaching with use of an evaluation system that “coheres with the trend toward inquiry-oriented teacher education” (p. 754). This evaluation trend prescribes

teachers to become critical consumers of research and engage in practitioner initiated inquiry . . . an evaluation system that provides guidance for evaluators to assess microteaching performances. By doing so, the evaluation system and the resulting feedback might provide the content needed for reflection, and practitioner initiated inquiry of microteaching performances. (Brent & Thompson, 1996, as cited in Subramaniam, 2006, p. 667)

Principal-led microteaching clinics are a systemic mode for principals to distinguish themselves as leaders of learning. Through direct modeling, monitoring, and supervision of teachers, microteaching clinics create what Allen and Ryan (1969) describe as potent opportunities for collaborative exchange, training, and teacher development.

Microteaching has expanded new approaches to instructional supervision, yet a growing body of research proposes that the professional uses of microteaching within the pragmatic contexts of schools have not been fully realized.

### **From Random Acts of Improvement to New Insights: New Applications For Microteaching**

“The continuous education of teachers must be fostered by new attitudes and new approaches” (Allen & Ryan, 1969, p. 73). Microteaching represents that approach. “As new curricula and methodologies are developed, teachers should have a chance to gain mastery over them before they actually try them out in the classroom. Microteaching can provide such modes of training” (Allen & Ryan, 1969, p. 73). Rather than appropriating money, investing time, as well as human and material resources in pedagogical training, I propose that principals use microteaching as an action research tool to diagnose areas of needed pedagogical support within their faculties and tailor prescriptive professional development agendas based on those needs. Given that microteaching was designed to provide teachers with a “safe setting for the acquisition of the techniques and skills of their professions” (Allen & Ryan, 1969, p. 4), it can still be used, present-day, to elicit the same results.

Allen and Ryan (1969) asserted some 50 years ago that microteaching is a vehicle for unlocking new perspectives on the process of teaching and learning, and these methods still hold true. Microteaching remains a viable teacher-training tool and a vector for change in the leadership behaviors and dispositions of principals. The aforementioned propositions of ways to use microteaching in new and innovative ways are just the tip of iceberg as it relates to the pragmatic potential microteaching offers. Among the proposed methods, the potency of microteaching is distilled by one idea—modeling. Allen and Ryan (1969) examine the centrality of modeling through microteaching, “Modeling is the natural instructional counterpart of the practices dimension of microteaching” (p. 3).

Recurring throughout numerous studies involving microteaching, (Brent, Wheatley, & Thomson, 1996; Cornford, 1996; Sherin, 2003), modeling is repeatedly cited as a foundational component essential to the success of microteaching. “To train teachers initially—and then to maintain professional skill through a lifetime of service—is a tremendously complex task” (Allen & Ryan, 1969, p. 3). By employing microteaching to introduce, model, assess, retrain, and subsequently evaluate teachers on the activity of teaching should be considered among the most expensive commercial teacher training models and professional development opportunities at principals’ disposal. Seeking external programs and people to support the professional development agenda of communities of practice must be renegotiated through microteaching. Through this, principals not only emphasize the viability of homespun solutions to target the deficits within their communities of practice, through a principal-led microteaching protocol, but they lead the efforts to minimize those deficits.

Summarily, discussion of the next steps for professional development requires discussion of the new leadership attitudes, behaviors, and dispositions principals must be willing to evince to become more efficacious leaders of learning. The broader context of leadership in this case orbits the proposition that principals, as leaders of learning, must think, act, and function in salient and innovative ways to marshal teachers into rigorous professional reflection that positively imbues their praxis. For the success of students this is critical, for teachers, vital, and for learning, imperative. To this end, microteaching is a viable, facilitative tool.

### **CHAPTER III**

#### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

The exploration of lived experience is both complex and dimensional. When the researcher seeks to understand the complexities of social phenomenon the case study is an apt vehicle to facilitate this exploration (Yin, 2003). Stake (1995) suggested that case studies carry great utility, both theoretically and pragmatically, in the facilitation of educational research. More specifically, a phenomenological methodological approach is key in exploring the complexities of social phenomena. Given this, I employed a phenomenological case study methodology to explore the social interactions between four teachers and a principal from Hope High School, to investigate their response to a principal-led, inquiry-oriented professional development protocol that employed microteaching.

This chapter foundationalizes phenomenology as a theoretical and methodological framework for this study, and presents discussion of the method of data collection and analysis. Additionally, this section presents discussion of the focus of this study and describes the methodology, data collection method, method of data analysis, and the conceptual framework that guided this investigation. Guided by the primary research questions, “Is principal-led microteaching a viable tool to facilitate professional development within schools?” and “To what measure does hermeneutic reflection in the case of a principal-led microteaching protocol impact teachers’ pedagogical practice?,”

this study explores the experiences of teachers engaged in a principal-led professional development protocol using microteaching.

Within the field of educational leadership, the canon is rife with a conceptualization of principal as instructional leader; however, there are limitations in the literature on defining pragmatic methods for principals to exercise this role. In educational administration, research has sought to determine the extent to which leadership affects perceptual and independent measures of school performance (Hoy & Miskel, 1991), which in the case of this study is an examination of a case of principal-led microteaching as a method of supporting teacher efficacy.

The study is based on the widely accepted premise that effective schools are led by principals who are instructional leaders. As instructional leaders, principals must be intentional in employing methods that (a) establish them as instructional leaders, (b) devise clear and contiguous professional development opportunities for teachers at all levels, and (c) provide substantive feedback as a means of professional development.

This section presents discussion of the phenomenological approach in two distinct ways, first, as the theoretical framework that undergirds this study, and second, as the methodological approach that was used to execute this study.

### **Phenomenology**

Van Manen (1990) posits that lived experience is central to phenomenological research, and through this method the subjectivities of experience are captured and interpreted.

The aim of phenomenology is to transform lived experience into a textual expression of its essence—in such a way that the effect of the text is at once a reflexive re-living and reflective appropriation of something meaningful: a notion by which a reader is powerfully animated in his or her own lived experience. (p. 36)

According to van Manen (1997), phenomenology is characterized as the study of lived experience. Its emphasis is on the world as lived by a person, not the world or reality as something separate from the person (Valle, King, & Halling, 1989). Heidegger (1927/1962) confirms this believing that understanding is a basic form of human existence, in that understanding is not a way we know the world, but rather the way we are (Polkinghorne, 1983). Through such qualitative methods as participant observations, open-ended interviews, and narrative research, phenomenology is concerned with the exploration and interpretation of human behavior from the subject's own frame of reference (Bogdan & Taylor, 1998). Given this, phenomenological research is hinged on the idea that subjects serve as key informants of the research, and by exploring the phenomenological experiences of subjects, in this case teachers participating in a principal-led microteaching protocol, the researcher will gain insight into their subjective experiences of participating in a principal-led microteaching protocol. Through systematic reflection and unpacking of lived experience, phenomenology was used to explore teachers' narratives as they revisit, reflect, and make sense of their participation in a principal-led microteaching protocol.

Laverty (2003) expounds, presenting key thinking by Husserl, a principal founder of phenomenology.

Husserl (1989) criticized psychology as a science that had gone wrong by attempting to apply methods of the natural sciences to human issues. He charged that these pursuits ignored the fact that psychology deals with living subjects who are not simply reacting automatically to external stimuli, but rather are responding to their own perception of what these stimuli mean. (p. 3)

Husserl's (1998) polemic quintessentially captures the methodological significance of phenomenology as a mode of inquiry. Using phenomenology as a qualitative method was key to understanding the salient experiences of the participants in this case, and of equal significance to the reporting this study's findings. According to Lavery (2003), phenomenological inquiry begs the question, "What is this experience like?" as it attempts to unfold meanings as they are lived in everyday existence" (p. 4). For the purpose of reporting, it is critical to delineate the differences, though slight, between phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology, its kissing cousin. Wilson and Hutchinson (1991) describe,

Like phenomenology, hermeneutic phenomenology is concerned with the life world or human experience as it is lived. The focus is toward illuminating details and seemingly trivial aspects within experience that may be taken for granted in our lives, with a goal of creating meaning and achieving a sense of understanding. (as cited in Lavery, 2003, p. 7)

In espousing hermeneutic phenomenology to recursively examine phenomena in this study, video footage, interviews, transcribed data, and use of personal experiences were used as qualitative data sources. Subsequently, reporting findings using hermeneutic phenomenology was essential to exploring the complex and dimensional experiences of the teacher participants. By recursively examining and re-examining their experiences for the purpose of exhuming new, overlooked, and even forgotten meaning, participants



engaged in hermeneutic analysis of their experiences after participating in the principal-led professional development protocol (see Figure 1).

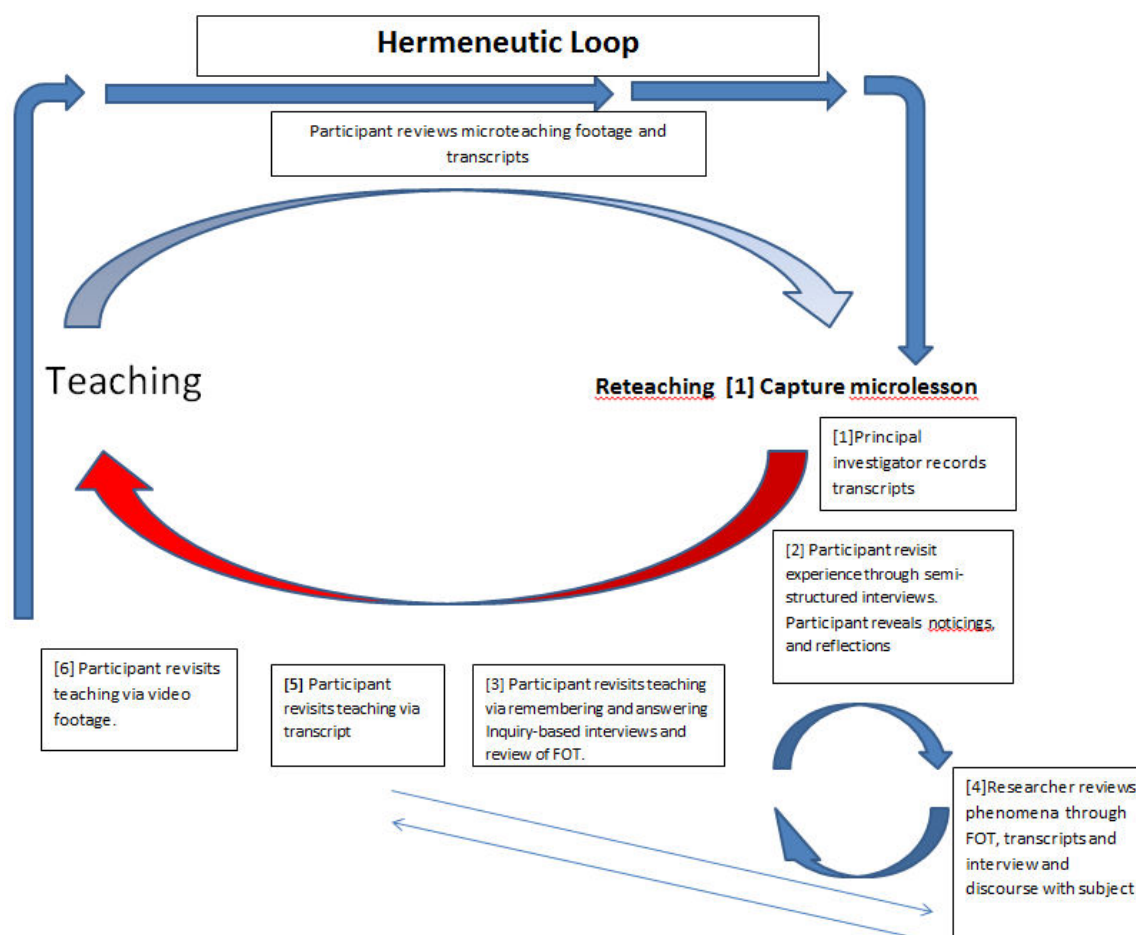


Figure 1. Hermeneutic Loop

Erduran (2007) poses similar methodological questions to the ones I wrestled with in justifying use of this method. “What justifies the choice of one methodological approach over another? What does a particular methodological approach enable us to do and how does it do so?” (Erduran, 2007, p. 47). In fact there were a multiplicity of methodological choices to be made before, during and after the research; but hermeneutic

phenomenology best operationalized the methodological “*how*” within the context of this inquiry. Analogously, qualitativists like archaeologists, when selecting the tools with which to tunnel through the ontological, methodological and epistemological layers of social phenomena to exhume understanding, must choose their paradigmatic lens as carefully as their shovel. In this case, hermeneutic phenomenology was the excavatory tool.

In exhuming meaning from the participants in this case, Munhall (1989) confirms the merit of hermeneutic phenomenology describing Heidegger as having a view of people and the world as “indissolubly related in cultural, in social and in historical contexts” (as cited in Lavery, 2003, p. 8). This gives rise to the importance of understanding the experiences, stories and histories of the participants in this case in juxtaposition with their realities. Their experiences and actions as human beings have ultimately imbued their experiences and actions as educators; and their experiences and actions as educators have imbued their experiences and actions within the context of this research. In essence, participants’ stories were as significant to the context of this research as their neatly storied in-vivo quotations.

### **Reflective Practice**

With both philosophical and pragmatic underpinnings, discussion of reflective practice is a natural segue to undergird the discussion of this study’s methodology. Literature exploring the role of reflection as a pragmatic tool of development is age-old. Underpinned by Plato’s apologetic claim that “the unexamined life is not worth living,” practitioners have engaged in exploration of personal and professional inquiry as a tool of

professional discovery. Within the canon of literature, both ancient and contemporary, the framing, critiquing, and underpinning of reflective practice arguably foundationalize the theoretical assumptions supporting reflection as a tool for professional development. If researchers and principals alike are to make the argument that teacher efficacy is linked not only to contiguous professional development, but contiguous reflection, then neither can be studied in isolation. As such, this section revisits the fundamental premise of reflection as tool of inquiry, presenting a view of the literature that undergirds the relevance of microteaching as a tool for inquiry, and feedback as a tool foundational to teacher development. If principals are to marshal teachers into the investigative exercise of self-examination, they must first understand the movement's theoretical roots.

Through examination of key writers, philosophers, and practitioners, I explore a range of culturally diverse literature to illuminate a broader, culturally relevant understanding of reflective practice in an effort to contextualize the discussion of principals as leaders of learning. In this study microteaching is merely a methodological tool to capture teaching. The work of Socrates (as cited in Lee, 1987), Dewey (1906/1933), and Schön (1983) guide this discussion.

The body of literature conceptualizing the merits of reflective practice in educational and leadership studies is canonical in this discussion, foundationalizing the argument that principals must lead teachers in activities that encourage examination of their practice (Blase & Blase, 1999, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Drago-Severson, 2007; Fullan, 2005; Johnson and The Next Generation of Teachers, 2004; Renyi, 1996). The power of self-examination as tool of professional development undergirds the

concept of microteaching. Developed in Stanford University's Department of Education in 1963, and continues to inform thinking in and around educational leadership theory and self-reflection. Reflective thinking, and its origins, are philosophical in nature, but hold great utility in the discussion of pragmatic methods principals can use to develop teachers. Through the contributions of Socrates, Dewey, and Schön, this section explores the social contract between principals as leaders of learning and presents discussion of the intersections of principal-led microteaching and reflective practice.

Reflective practice is “the capacity to reflect on action so as to engage in a process of continuous learning” (Schön, 1983, as cited in Atherton, 2011, p. 1). By engaging in this investigative practice, teachers Bolton (2010) argues, “pay critical attention to the practical values and theories which inform everyday actions, by examining practice reflectively and reflexively. This leads to developmental insight” (p. xix). Exploration of this typology, however canonical within educational studies and leadership literature, is neither revealing, nor new. Socrates, as early as the fifth century B.C.E. explored conditions under which reflection could be used as a tool of inquiry. He charges,

If on the other hand I tell you that to let no day pass without discussing goodness and all the other subjects about which you hear me talking and examining both myself and others is really the very best thing that a man can do, and that life without this sort of examination is not worth living. (Socrates, Sec. 38)

For Socrates examination of the self for the purpose of improvement was critical, and within the context of this study, this argument readily grounds the practice of principals leading teachers in self-examination of their practice through microteaching.

Moreover, Socrates's insight is relevant to this discussion because of this methodological approach to marshal his educands into self-examination. Through the recursive exercise of probing, questioning, and answering, Socrates was able to lead his educands into deeper levels of reflection, analysis and subsequently, change. Socrates' perspective creates a usable typology for contemporary principals to mirror when leading and supervising teachers in the ways of professional reflection. Loughran (2002) writes,

It is through the development of knowledge and understanding of the practice setting and the ability to recognize and respond to such knowledge that the reflective practitioner becomes truly responsive to the needs, issues, and concerns that are so important in shaping practice. (p. 9)

This inquiry-oriented approach to leadership is one explored by later writers (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Farrell, 2004; Reid & O'Donoghue, 2001) who widely accept inquiry into professional practice and questioning of their routine practices and assumptions, as relevant and usable dispositions for twenty-first century leaders. This approach is of further significance to site-based decision makers as Reid & O'Donoghue (2001) expands,

Many of the issues facing educators today are context-bound: they are not amenable to universal solutions. That is, educators face the considerable challenge of designing curricula for local contexts that are flexible enough to address the rapid growth of knowledge. . . . Clearly system support is crucial in assisting educators to meet these challenges. But just as clearly, educators must themselves have the capacity to be always deepening their understandings of teaching and learning through reflection and inquiry (Reid & O'Donoghue, 2001, p. 11)

Reid and O'Donoghue (2001) operationalize the assumption that educational leaders, in this case, principals, must promote an inquiry-oriented approach to developing teachers. This reflection is useful for teachers in that it first challenges them to be reflexive practitioners, disturbing the equilibrium that often accompanies status quo practice. This reflection forces an inward, introspective glance into their personal practices, assumptions, and beliefs centering their practice—a typology rooted in Deweyan thought. Reid and O'Donoghue (2001) acknowledge that this inquiry-oriented approach is not realized in most educational systems. Reid and O'Donoghue (2001) reverberate the Socratic premise that the “examined life,” or in this case, “examined professional practice,” are critical to principals meeting the new challenges of educational leadership.

### **Research Design**

The study is based on the widely accepted premise that effective schools are led by principals who are instructional leaders. As instructional leaders, principals must be intentional in employing methods that (a) establish them as instructional leaders, (b) devise clear and contiguous professional development opportunities for teachers at all levels, and (c) provide substantive feedback as a means of professional development.

The research design was developed to examine and chronicle a principal-led professional development model employing microteaching, by exploring the phenomenological narratives of teacher participants participating in a principal-led professional development protocol. “Qualitative research,” according to Creswell (1998), “is an inquiry process that explores social and human problems” (p. 15). Denzin and

Lincoln (1994) assert, “qualitative researchers study phenomena in natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret them, and the meanings people assign to them” (p. 2). Within the context of this study phenomenological methodology allowed the researcher to explore the lived experiences of teachers participating in a principal-led professional development model, espousing microteaching. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) assert qualitative research as a methodology of best fit in this investigative exercise, acknowledging it as an optimal methodology in exploring the dimensionality of phenomena, in this case, the lived experiences of teachers.

### **Action Research**

With regard to scientific inquiry, John Dewey educes, “Knowledge is not a copy of something that exists independently of its being known” rather, “*“it is an instrument or organ of successful action”*” (Dewey, as cited in Menand, 2001, p. 361). Such is the mission of action research. Dewey’s ontological belief that knowledge cannot be examined apart from the ways we come to know is hinged on qualitative foundations. As such, this study was concerned with findings, conclusions, and implications reached in this case, but of equal interest were this case’s epistemological foundations and how the ways of knowing were evinced among the school leader, researcher, and participants in this case as it related to their professional and leadership praxes.

More specifically, this investigative exercise was an action research case study exploring a principal-led professional development protocol utilizing microteaching and inquiry-oriented feedback. “Action research is a process in which participants examine their own educational practice systematically and carefully, using the techniques of

research” (Ferrance, 2000, p. 1). Action research operates on the assumption that researchers are key informants of the research because of their connectedness to the phenomena or their “authority of experience” within the community of practice (hooks, 1990, p. 149). hooks (1994) elaborates, “Personal testimony, personal experience, is such fertile ground for the production of [knowledge] because it usually forms the base of our theory” (p. 70). hooks’s (1994) analyses are foundational to the discussion of validity through action research. Inherent to this discussion are questions of credibility, trustworthiness, validity with findings, and biases researchers may hold while studying phenomena they are familiar with or are close to. However, Watts (1985) justifies this methodology, at least with the context of schools, arguing, “Teachers and principals work best on problems they have identified for themselves . . . becoming more effective when encouraged to examine and assess their own work and then consider ways of working differently” (p. 118). Ferrance (2000) further endorses the merits of action research in schools asserting,

Practitioners are responsible for making more and more decisions in the operations of schools, and they are being held publicly accountable for student achievement results. The process of action research assists educators in assessing needs, documenting the steps of inquiry, analyzing data, and making informed decisions that can lead to desired outcomes. (p. xiii)

### **Origins of Action Research**

Action research methodology emerged in the mid-1940s from the work of German-born MIT psychology professor, Kurt Lewin (Elder, Max, & Chisholm, 1993). “Lewin is credited with coining the term ‘action research’ to describe work that did not



separate the investigation from the action needed to solve the problem” (McFarland & Stansell, 1993, p. 14). In its present iteration action research, also referred to as participatory action research, is a research method that employs members within a community of practice to engage in pragmatic research designed to problem-solve issues within a community of practice (Wenger, 1998). Action research rests on the proposition that often the best solutions to studying and solving social phenomena rest within the solutions generated by the practitioners that live, work and study with their respective communities of practice. Subsequently, policy generated through action research comports with the direct needs and principles of the constituents within these designated communities of practice.

Educational leadership studies in the U.S. show a trend of action research methods used to study and subsequently reform schools starting with Dewey, American educational philosopher, who was a strong proponent of action research and its precursor, which he discussed extensively (Dewey, 1916; Dewey, 1927; Dewey, 1930). With this form of research, Dewey proposed educators’ context-embedded involvement in investigative “problem-solving” within their communities of practice was both necessary and purposeful. This problem solving, Dewey suggested, served the interests of constituents within communities of practice by mitigating community ills (Dewey, 1916; Dewey, 1927; Dewey, 1930). Though predating Lewin’s (1946) formalized conceptualization of action research, Dewey’s method was prescient in framing a version of action research, called “pragmatic problem-solving,” that was designed within university contexts and focused on educators’ using problem-solving methods to mitigate

concerns centering curriculum, professional development and pedagogy. “According to Dewey, knowledge takes place within human experience, the complete network of interaction between man and his environment. To him knowledge getting activity begins when we start not merely to think but to think reflectively” (Olatunji, 2012, p. 136). Dewey’s ideas emphasize the criticality of problem-solving, reflective thinking, and action research specific to the communities we work and practice in. Dewey (1933) charges thinkers to use this method to “transform a situation in which there is experienced obscurity, doubt, conflict, [and] disturbance . . . into a situation that is clear . . . [and] coherent” (pp. 100–101).

Regardless of the historical interpretations the literature confirms that action research emphasizes problem-solving and critical reflection, the results of which are to be stimulatory in defining and diagnosing concerns within communities of practice. Overstating the obvious, action research is agential and should be a catalyst for change within communities of practice.

Corey (1953) typifies Deweyan thought as it relates to educational researchers conducting research within their communities of practice, citing: “We are convinced that the disposition to study . . . the consequences of our own teaching is more likely to change and improve our practices than is reading about what someone else has discovered of his teaching” (p. 70). Like other branches of qualitative inquiry, the end-in-mind of action research is not to make findings generalizable but rather to offer salient solutions to idiosyncratic issues within particular spaces. Criticism of action research include: claims that the approach lacks empirical merit, in addition to criticisms of faulty

validity, reliability, and positivist replicability. Action research is often used to investigate phenomena within schools, thus its natural link to professional development (Noffke & Stevenson, 1995), which is essential to this study.

Ferrance (2000) illuminates new uses for action research as a method of inquiry, “[Action research] is increasingly becoming a tool for school reform, as its very individual focus allows for a new engagement in educational change” (p. 8). While Borg (1965) postulates, “action research emphasizes the involvement of teachers in problems in their own classrooms and has its primary goal the in-service training and development of the teacher rather than the acquisition of general knowledge in the field of education” (p. 313, as cited in Ferrance, 2000, p. 8). Summarily, action research was a fitting methodological approach for this case. Subsequent findings of this investigation will be catalyzed to engender more efficacious practice among the teachers and leaders of learning within my community of practice.

### **Context**

For this case I selected a mid-sized, urban, Title I high school in North Carolina. This location was an ideal site to perform this research because of its diverse student and teacher population. During the time the study was conducted, the school, Hope High, had an enrollment of nearly 1,200 students, with an average attendance rate exceeding 90%. Hope was designated as a magnet school, offering the International Baccalaureate program, as well as Advanced Placement courses, and regular education courses. Over one-hundred teachers and support staff served on the Hope High faculty along with five school administrators.

Hope High School is seated on a heavily trafficked main thoroughfare, wedged between a sizable apartment complex and a well-established single-family residential community. Closely positioned to the central business district, Hope is characterized as an urban high school. More than 90% of the students attending Hope receive free or reduced lunch, a strong indicator of the economic background of the student body. From 2006 to the time of the study, Hope made significant academic gains, increasing the school-wide composite by nearly 40%, attendance rate by nearly 50%, and the graduation rate by nearly 45%. Hope ostensibly is an urban school, but one with a proven record of growing academic success, which made it an ideal site to conduct this study.

Discussion of the context of this study is as critical to this study as discussion of the methods used to conduct this investigation. As school leader and researcher in this study, it was critical to employ methodological safeguards to suppress my positionality while conducting this research. As a school administrator within this community of practice, it was essential that I fully addressed my positionality, first, to ensure valid findings, and second, to safeguard teacher participants from duress associated with my positionality. Additional discussion is presented in a later section.

### **Teachers' Profiles**

The participants for this case study consisted of four teachers from grade levels 9-12. All of the teacher participants were designated from math and English content areas. All participants were selected voluntarily, and were given the option to discontinue the study at any time. Participants were selected based on North Carolina licensure status and were classified as initially licensed teachers, probationary licensure, or those holding

career status. It is important to note that for a diverse perspective, teachers with varied years of experience in education were preferred; however, rather than self-select, all teachers that volunteered to participate were recruited. Ultimately, two initially licensed English teachers, one career-status English teacher, and one career-status math teacher participated in the study.

Four teachers volunteered to participate in this case study. Of these four, all were women. Of the four, two were Caucasian, one Hispanic-American, and one African-American. Three of the participants were in their 20s, while one was in her 30s. One teacher, Delgado, was an initially-licensed English teacher, having taught one year at Hope High School. Delgado also fulfilled her student teaching requirement at Hope High School two years prior. Another participant, Arthur, had eleven total years of teaching experience, having taught at Hope High for three years of those years, one year on a Native American reservation, and for five years in Arizona. At the time of the study Arthur had obtained North Carolina career licensure status, and was certified in English.

Hough, another of this case's participants, obtained North Carolina career licensure status in 2009, and was certified in the area of mathematics. At the time of the study Hough had completed seven years of teaching at Hope High School, in addition to a full year of student teaching at the same location. For Hough, Hope High School was the only school in which she had ever worked. The fourth participant, Silverstein, at the time of the study had obtained probationary licensure status, having had two years of teaching experience. At the time of the study, Silverstein taught at Hope High for two years. See Table 1 for participant profiles.

Table 1. Participant Profiles

Participant	Subject Taught	Years of Experience	NC Licensure Status
Hough	Math	7	Career
Delgado	English	1	Initially Licensed
Arthur	English	11	Career
Silverstein	English	2	Probationary

### **Delimitations and Limitations**

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the efficacy of a site-based, principal-led professional development protocol using micro-teaching and inquiry-based formative feedback, and to examine the narrative experiences of the teachers participating in this professional development protocol. This design and subsequent methodological approach were designated to add to the existing body of research on principal leadership and professional, and to offer implications for pragmatic, site-based professional development implementation for teachers and principals.

As another delimiting factor, it is critical to emphasize the inquiry-oriented approach in this study. As a school administrator and researcher within the community of practice, it was important to create conditions in which participants could speak and report freely. The broader pursuits of this study rested on the proposition that principal-led feedback is critical to teacher efficacy; however, given my role as an instructional leader and evaluator within Hope's learning community, it was critical to employ a research design that safeguarded teacher participants from censoring their thoughts and ideas about their experiences with leadership, feedback, and the microteaching protocol.

To this end, all reported feedback was limited to inquiry-oriented probing, which was grounded by the assumption that teachers' voices and experiences in this study would not be suppressed if the feedback they received through microteaching was solely inquiry-based. More simply stated, during the ten-week study, the only feedback teachers received was in the form of questioning.

Additional delimitations in the study include: the years of teaching experience of participants, which was factored into the research design to yield representative professional experience. Gender and ethnicity, too, were delimiting factors; however they were not considered as matters for analysis in this study. The research design delimits the professional development approach to inquiry-oriented questioning. This was intentional as the principal investigator wanted teachers to freely report on their own noticings. Semi-structured questioning gave focus to the informants.

Other significant delimitations within the sample include teacher selection. For the purpose of this exercise all participants involved in this study were teachers I did not formally evaluate in my role as school administrator. I was careful to delimit the study to teachers that I did not formally evaluate, in an effort to limit biases associated with formal observations and evaluations, and to prevent conflicts in their roles as teachers and participants. This variable was also key in ensuring teachers were free to teach without the preoccupation with whether the observation was formal or informal, evaluative or non-evaluative.

### **Limitations**

It is important to note that because of this case's phenomenological approach to data collection and interpretation, participants' experiences within the professional development protocol serve as key data sources (Field & Morse, 1985). Subsequent interpretation and analyses were mediated through the informant's "lived experiences" (Creswell, 1998, p. 54), which were limitations to this case. Given that this study is rooted in phenomenological ideology, the range of the respondents' professional experiences were limited to the contexts in which they lived and taught. For example, participants had worked in rural, urban, and high schools, within elementary and middle school contexts, as well as a reservation school, all imbuing the context of their professional experiences, as well as their values, beliefs, and assumptions about their experiences as a teacher. This is key to later analysis of qualitative findings presented in a forthcoming chapter.

### **Data Collection**

Data were collected from the following sources: semi-structured interview results from teachers, observation of microteaching footage, and teachers' analyses of microteaching footage and transcripts. Participants facilitated microlessons ranging from seven minutes to fifteen minutes, all of which were video-recorded. Video footage were subsequently transcribed and returned to participants to review and authenticate for member-checking. Once the recorded data were authenticated, the data were reviewed, coded, and analyzed (see Table 2).



Table 2. Research Steps

Method
1. Participants facilitated 7-15 minute microlessons.
2. Researcher reviewed video footage and transcribed microlessons.
3. Participants reviewed transcripts, noting reflective notes and member check transcripts for accuracy.
4. Participants and research reviewed video footage and transcripts in post-mortem sessions noting reflective notes.
5. Researcher probes participants with semi-structured questions.
6. Researcher collects responses using Formative Observation Tool
7. Transcripts de-identified to maintain participant anonymity
8. Transcripts coded to determine in-vivo themes.

Concepts that were aligned to the research questions were bracketed before coding. Creswell (2007) encourages researchers to look for code segments that can be used to describe information and to develop themes. “The codes should represent information that the researcher expected to find before the study, surprising information the researcher did not expect to find, and information that is conceptually interesting or unusual to the researcher” (Creswell, 2007, p. 151). These pre-coded themes include teachers’ method of teaching vocabulary, teachers’ perception of principals as instructional leaders and leaders of learning, and self-awareness through microteaching. This case study investigated a principal-led professional development model that sought to examine and chronicle an inquiry-oriented approach to teacher development. Guided by the primary research questions, “Is principal-led microteaching a viable tool to facilitate professional development within schools?” and “To what measure does

hermeneutic reflection in the case of a principal-led microteaching protocol impact teachers' pedagogical practice?," this study investigates the experiences of teachers participating in a principal-led professional development protocol. The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate the lived experiences of teachers participating in a principal-facilitated professional development microteaching protocol, and to examine how teachers' experiences participating in this protocol impacted their teaching practice. Data were collected during observations and post-mortem sessions using the researcher-designed Formative Observation Tool.

### **Formative Observation Tool**

This study entailed a ten week period of data collection. Data were collected using a researcher designed instrument called the Formative Observation Tool (FOT). The tool was used to collect transcribed data and to record formative feedback. All data, including inquiry-oriented feedback, were collected using the Formative Observation Tool.

For ten weeks teachers were observed and video and narrative data collected using the Formative Observation Tool. Each week, teachers presented microlessons demonstrating how they facilitated or planned to prospectively facilitate, vocabulary instruction. Teachers facilitated seven to fifteen minute microlessons in whole-group sessions before their peer participants. Following each observation I reviewed video footage, transcribed data, and provided transcribed data to participants within five days of data collection. Teachers reviewed their respective transcripts, noting questions, concerns, and noticings. Subsequently, participants approved transcripts for accuracy

using member-checking. Accordingly, teachers responded to inquiry-based probing from the researcher-designed Formative Observation Tool, and returned them to the researcher.

Teacher participants and the researcher met weekly, for one hour, on an individualized basis, to review their respective “post-mortem” seminar footage. Teachers revealed noticings, debriefed with the principal investigator, and narrated their clips to explain their noticings. Post-mortem seminars were videotaped and transcribed for subsequent meta-analysis. Transcripts were made available to all participants for review, and were again conferred for accuracy. As a final measure, all data were de-identified to maintain the anonymity of the district, school, and participants associated with this case.

The content of feedback, as well as the inquiry-oriented method of probing and delivering feedback was examined over the study, with teacher efficacy measured through observation, self-reflection, self-reporting, interview, and video analyses. The protocol embedded a series of layered processes that created an inquiry-oriented framework for teachers and principals to engage in collaborative professional development, dialogic practice, and leveled discourse centering best practices.

Findings from this case study offered recommendations for a framework to promote more efficacious professional development models within urban high school contexts. Though action research findings are typically context-bound, findings may be portable, offering similar typological models for professional development models for elementary and middle school teacher development programs in both urban and non-urban contexts.

### **Data Analysis**

The Formative Observation Tool employed elements of rating and sorting qualitative data. Emergent themes were sorted, clustered and ranked by the researcher to determine significant themes. Respondents' interview data, self-reported data, and transcribed data became the basis for analysis. The Formative Observation Tool was multi-variant in function, recording all qualitative observations, narrative data, and captured narratives of respondents.

During the study, teachers were observed by the researcher as they facilitated weekly simulated lessons in Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings. Observations did not to exceed one hour per week and were followed up post-mortem sessions, conducted weekly (see Appendix C).

Data were collected and analyzed using a range of data sources to include: open-ended and semi-structured interviews, direct observations, and transcribed data (Yin, 1994). Data were coded and clustered into themed patterns and trends. Trends were reviewed and analyzed to determine significant themes throughout the data. Findings were synthesized and reported using in vivo coding. All findings were presented to participants at the close of the study.

Bacon and Spear's (2003) adaptive question framework offered guidance in facilitating inquiry-based questions during post-mortem debriefing. This framework served as a significant conceptual guide in framing the basis for the inquiry-oriented probing used to debrief participants in the post-mortem sessions. These themed questions

included motivation questions, ideal outcome questions, implication questions, sensory questions, and Colombo questions, presented by Bacon and Spear (2003).

**Motivation Questions:**

- What led you to do that?
- What were the factors in your decision?
- What would you prefer? Why?
- What is most important to you?
- If you had to do it over again, what would you do differently?

**Ideal Outcome Questions:**

- What are your goals and aspirations?
- What is the best possible outcome?
- What would you ideally like to see?
- What would the best circumstances be?
- If there were no constraints, what would be possible?

**Implication Questions:**

- What would happen if . . . ?
- What are the implications of . . . ?
- How serious would it be if . . . ?
- How bad/good could it be if . . . ?

**Sensory Questions:**

- How do you see . . . ?
- How do you envision . . . ?
- How does that sound to you?
- What does that feel like?
- What are your feelings about . . . ?

**Colombo Questions:**

- How does that work?
- Why would you approach it that way?
- I don't understand. Help me out with that.
- Please explain or tell me more about . . . (Bacon and Spear, 2003, pp. 174–181).

Given that inquiry-oriented probing was central to this investigation, the nature of the questions was critical to data analysis. Analysis of the preceding questions occurred in weekly post-mortem sessions and during consultative individualized post-mortem

sessions. Bacon and Spear's (2003) questioning typology was used as a conceptual guide to facilitate inquiry-oriented probing during this study.

### **Validity and Trustworthiness**

As a school administrator and principal investigator within this community of practice, these dual roles were salient variables that required methodological attention. This research design and approach were selected because of personal interests in the quality and availability of professional development within this community of practice.

It is important to note that this research was conducted in my school. Some critics express vehement disagreement that research should not be conducted within the context of a researcher's community of practice, questioning the credibility of the researcher's findings. Ferrance (2000) counters by asserting, "Action research is a process in which participants examine their own educational practice systematically, using the techniques of research" (p. 2). Given this, I fully acknowledge my role as assistant principal and principal researcher in this study, thereby acknowledging my inherent researcher bias. Predating my professional role in this school context, I was an educator first, whose personal and professional pathways led to the study of teacher efficacy. This topic of interest has since developed and become a catalyst for my scholastic interest in this area. Watts (1985) expounds supporting the premise of my position, "Teachers and principals work best on problems they have identified themselves" and "teachers and principals become more effective when encouraged to examine and assess their own work and the consider ways of working differently" (p. 118). Anderson, Herr, and Nihlen (1994)

elucidate driving questions, much like the ones I reflected on when considering where to conduct my research:

How you can improve your practice, what you can contribute to the field of knowledge about learning, curriculum, teaching, and running a school necessitates an adaptable research methodology. It is important for action researchers investigating their own sites to remember that, despite traditional qualitative techniques, “[t]he ‘sedentary wisdom’ of long-established traditions offers legitimation rather than liberation; the biggest breakthroughs in scientific thinking have often required a break with investigative traditions rather than blind allegiance to them” (Wolcott, 1992, p. 17). (p. 158)

This method of data collection and analysis, as well as use of an inquiry-oriented approach to collecting narrative data, employ phenomenological elements, which embrace my role as a key informant of the research as well as a member of the community of practice. Rather than requiring me to divorce myself from my role as school administrator and principal researcher, action research permits the methodological space to perform both roles.

The delimiting factors were purposive. My unwillingness to intrude in the participants’ realizations about the microlesson and their teaching through structured questions was intentional. Through inquiry-oriented probing I simply narrowed the participants’ focus through questioning, catalyzing their approach to meta-analysis of their microlesson and subsequent noticings. This approach permitted me to operate as a practitioner and researcher without the discourses competing, just as I can walk and chew gum at the same time. I can speak and write from both places, while maintaining my integrity as a researcher. I sought catalytic validity in this study, which Lather (1986) frames as “the degree to which the research process reorients, focus, and energizes

participants toward knowing reality in order to transform it” (p. 272). Anderson et al. (1994) frame the imperative for this type of research:

In the case of action research, not only the participants, but the researchers themselves must be open to reorienting their view of reality as well as their view of their practitioner roles. All involved in the research deepen their understanding of the social reality under study and should be moved to some action to change it . . . The most powerful practitioner research studies are those in which the practitioners recount a change in their own and their participants’ understandings. (p. 42)

This reinforces the imperative of conducting research in your own school and offers salient insight into the rationale of participant observation within respective communities of practice. Anderson et al. (1994) suggest that practitioner research is a “significant way of knowing about schools” (p. 228). Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) elaborate, opining “inquiry by [individuals] of the community realigns their relationships to knowledge and to the brokers of knowledge and also necessitates a redefinition of the notion of a knowledge base for [leadership]” (p. 43) Anderson et al. (1994) offer a comical illustration of this double-consciousness reality of practitioner-researcher, Nihlen (1976), an emergent action researcher. While conducting dissertation research in a first-grade classroom, a teacher tried to assist her by pinning a sign with the word “*INVISIBLE*” on her blouse. “Nihlen realized that the children never stopped seeing her, but allowed her to watch them as if she was invisible” (Anderson et al., 1994, p. 188). The aforementioned illustration captures the essence of my existence as a researcher conducting research in the school where I serve as administrator. As Nihlen (1976) surmised, my role as administrator, within the context of this action research, was



omnipresent. I realized early on this process of data collection, as Nihlen (1976) did, that my role as a school administrator would never be invisible. It is through careful qualitative choices that I found equanimity between my personal beliefs, the intent of the research, and subsequent findings.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS**

This case study was an investigation of a principal-led professional development model that sought to examine and chronicle an inquiry-oriented approach to teacher development in an urban high school. The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate the lived experiences of teachers participating in a principal-facilitated professional development microteaching protocol, and to examine how teachers' experiences participating in this protocol impacted their teaching practice.

This study addressed methods to develop an alternate model of professional development designated to enhance teacher efficacy as it related to vocabulary instruction. Findings offered recommendations for a framework to promote more efficacious professional development practices vis-à-vis vocabulary instruction, within high school contexts. The data were gathered using in-depth, semi-structured interviews. In vivo coding was used to report findings. Data were coded and presented in five thematic sections: (1) response to inquiry-oriented leadership; (2) approaches to vocabulary instruction; (3) expanded policy in teacher education programs reflection on practice; (4) pedagogical preparation and delivery; and lastly, (5) the impact of reflection on participants' practice.

A case study protocol was used to interpret this study's findings (Yin, 2009). Case findings were derived from the analysis of data collected from the following sources to

include: semi-structured interview results from teachers; observation of microteaching footage; and teachers' analyses of microteaching footage and transcripts. Subsequent in-depth interviews were facilitated during post-mortem sessions to gather data to examine participants' experiences within the context of the professional development protocol for the purpose of determining the impact of the protocol on their efficacy as it related to vocabulary instruction. The participants were guided through a series of purposeful interviews using inquiry-oriented probing in an effort to obtain answers to pertinent questions regarding participants' experiences through microteaching as well as in determining implications for the professional development's impact on their practice. As a reminder, due to the nature of this case as action research methodology, all findings in this case are contextually-bound and are subsequently not generalizable.

### **Sample Description**

The participants for this case were selected from an urban high school in North Carolina. The section provides a description of the participants. The school featured in this study, as well as the names of participants are pseudonyms. Authorization to conduct this study was granted by the University of North Carolina at Greensboro's Internal Review Board, the Director of Research and Accountability within this North Carolina school district, the district's regional superintendent, and the school principal. All participants authorized informed consent to participate in this case (see Appendix A).

### **In Vivo Coding**

As Dey (1999) posits, "meaning in qualitative inquiry, is imputed by the use of coding" (p. 95), which researchers ostensibly use to assign meaning to data sets. For the

purpose of this investigation, coding is the fulcrum upon which analysis rests, and through the aforementioned thematic lenses, gives entre into the phenomenology of participants in this case. Charmaz (2006) suggests that coding in qualitative inquiry “assembles those bones into a working skeleton” (p. 45). Metaphorically, coding anchors reoccurring ideas, and structuralizes meaning-making throughout the data. This “framing” creates an organizational structure that brings sense to data. “All coding is a judgment call since we bring our subjectivities, our personalities, our predispositions, [and] our quirks to the process” (Sipe & Ghiso, 2004, pp. 482–483).

More specifically, in in-vivo coding, “categories are created from meaning units or actual phrases used in specific text segments” (Thomas, 2003, p. 4). Merriam (1998) defines “In-vivo,” Latin for “within the living,” as a method that involved analysis and interpretation in which, “[a] study’s findings . . . reflect the constructs, concepts, language, models, and theories that structured the study in the first place” (p. 48). Given this, in-vivo coding was espoused in the analysis of the data to ensure that the participants’ voices were at the fore of presenting findings, trumping the voice of the researcher. Emergent themes were extracted from significant narrative statements collected during participants’ interviews and bracketed using in vivo coding (Creswell, 2007). These narrative data assisted in identifying thematic clusters, and were used to formulate meaning and subsequently present this case’s findings. Using a purposeful interview protocol (Miles & Huberman, 1994), participants responded to a series of semi-structured questions in the hopes of allowing them narrative carte blanche to adequately describe their experiences in this case.

Following data collection, a structured analytic protocol ensued that entailed a close reading and rereading of the interviews and thematic coding of the data. Thomas (2003) elicits, “Inductive coding begins with close reading of the text and consideration of multiple meanings that are inherent in the text” (p. 4). Analytic analyses revealed emergent recursive patterns, or as (Creswell, 2007) describes, meaning units. Transcripts were read several times to identify themes and categories, first by the principal investigator, then by participants for member-checking. Questions were asked recursively in a series of in-depth interviews to gain clarity and to determine emergent themes. This process was used to develop categories, which were then conceptualized into broad themes after further discussion (Jain & Ogden, 1999). A copious review of the transcripts brought major themes to the fore. “Segments of interview text were coded enabling an analysis of interview segments on a particular theme, the documentation of relationships between themes and the identification of themes important to participants” (Elliott & Gillie, 1998, p. 331).

As the researcher, I chose not to play parlor tricks with participants’ words or to contour their language to fit an anterior research motive, to in effect *prove* the merits of microteaching. To the contrary, through in vivo coding, my axial premonitions about the possibilities of research findings and my subconscious research agenda were subordinated by the participants’ voices. Participants’ thinking and language drove analysis in this chapter, and emergent themes were used to efficiently report findings.

In Saldana’s (2009) *Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, he elaborates, “Coding is a heuristic (from the Greek, meaning “to discover”)—an exploratory problem-

solving technique without specific formulas to follow” (p. 8). “Coding is not just labeling, it is *linking*” (Richards & Mores, 2007, p. 137). Participants’ thinking and corresponding language frame the significance of their experiences and foundationalize the basis for this case’s findings. Coffey and Atkinson (1996) propose that “coding is usually a mixture of a data [summation] and data complication . . . breaking the data apart in analytically relevant ways in order to lead toward further questions about the data” (pp. 29–31). Throughout this chapter, data from this case highlight and buttress each theme. Findings are presented from the analysis of participants’ interviews using in-vivo coding.

Lastly, this study focused on how selected teachers viewed the influence of the role of principal as a leader of learning and its impact on teacher development. Emergent themes were extracted from significant statements drawn directly from participant’s interviews using in-vivo coding. These narrative data assisted in identifying thematic clusters and their associated formulated meanings (Creswell, 2007). To most effectively explore the data gathered in the study, the remainder of this chapter is divided into six thematic sections under the following headings: preparation and pedagogical delivery, approach to vocabulary and use of resources, reflection on practice, expanded policy in teacher education programs, and coaching through questioning, prefaced by a series of general findings.

### **Microteaching as a Professional Development Tool: *Context for Urban Pedagogues***

During the interview analysis, a general emergent finding among the teachers was their perception of the place for professional development in urban schools. Loucks-

Horsley et al. (2003) identify the following features of professional development that helps teachers to

make useful connections between teachers' existing ideas and new ones; provide opportunity for active engagement, discussion, and reflection to challenge existing ideas and construct new ones; challenge current thinking by producing and helping to resolve dissonance between new ideas and existing ones; support teachers to develop a range of strategies that address learning for all students. (p. 35)

Within the context of this case, all participants agreed with Loucks-Horsley et al.'s (2003) assertion, revealing that the microteaching process positively informed their teaching with varying degrees. When posed with the question, "What is clearer to you about the process of microteaching as a professional development tool?" Delgado distilled the impact of the protocol on her teaching,

It really focuses me to think about what I'm actually doing with these kids. What are they actually learning? How I am facilitating that learning. Am I being successful at it? So what's clearer to me is that sometimes my ultimate goal isn't clear and that needs to be clarified. What's clear to me is that I'm pretty transparent as far as my delivery and general interactions while I'm teaching. And gosh so many things . . .

Arthur added,

I would you recommend microteaching to a struggling colleague. I would. This semester I had a marginal student teacher who was not prepared. Microteaching would have been a great tool to use with him to get him to rehearse what he was going to present to the kids before he did. There are certain topics that I would not allow him to teach, and last year my intern, I would not allow her to teach grammar until I taught it to her. She didn't understand it, and I would not let her teach it to the kids. It will force them to see themselves on film. But some may just do it because they are required to. Microteaching will make them answer

questions about their teaching that they may not have otherwise been forced to answer.

As Loucks-Horsley et al. (2003) suggest, participants “made useful connections between teachers’ existing ideas and new ones; provide opportunity for active engagement, discussion, and reflection to challenge existing ideas and construct new ones” (p. 35). Within the post-mortem sessions, teachers shared resources, debated pedagogical approaches, challenged one another to think of alternate approaches as it related to instructional planning and delivery and asked clarifying questions about colleagues’ approaches. Revisiting the purpose of post-mortem sessions to the process of microteaching is critical to illuminate the impact these debriefings bore on the function of this protocol as a whole. The insights, noticings, and awarenesses that the literature Weick (1995) expressed are linked to professional sense-making vis-à-vis microteaching during these sessions.

Typically tired from a frenetic day of grading papers, hall duty, quelling student disagreements, and bedraggled department meetings, every Wednesday afternoon for ten weeks, these hurried practitioners filed into a vacant classroom prepared to facilitate microlessons. Participants carted newspaper articles, magazines, supplemental reading materials, props, and foldables to Room 407; each participant expressed that they were more nervous to present lessons before their colleagues than they were their actual students. Arthur elaborates,

It is sometimes nerve-racking to present to peers. I mean, I can present to a class of thirty with no problem, but when you have to present to your peers, they are a different audience. They know best practices, when sometimes our students don’t.



[Microteaching], it will force them to see themselves on film, and really see areas where we may be deficient. I mean, we all believe that we are good teachers, but microteaching makes you vulnerable.

Despite the initial discomfort associated with presenting to peers, participants soon gained a self-reported level of ease in facilitating simulated microlessons. Initially, as the (Allen & Ryan, 1969) suggested, surface reflection on microlesson footage included participants' commentary on the awkwardness of hearing and seeing themselves on film, astounded by the tonality of their voices or how nervous they appeared on film. But as weeks passed, so did the depth of participants' reflection as well as participants' reflection on microteaching as a professional development tool. Silverstein described this sentiment when asked to describe her overall experiences with microteaching as a tool for professional developmental. She revealed,

Well, I thought it was pretty awkward, I knew I talked a lot and I engage with my students in conversation, but I didn't realize just how much time I spend talking rather than engaging, particularly when I begin a new lesson.

When asked if microteaching lead her to this awareness, Silverstein offered that through reflection, it became clearer to her that she talked too much when introducing lessons. She offered,

After my student teaching experience at Maxwell High School I came to realize that I can't assume that students have prior knowledge [when introducing lessons]. But even though I can't assume that they *all* have it, I can't assume that no one does; so I have found that it is better if I try to draw from the students . . . some more than others.

Borrowing from Weick's (1995) language on sense-making, summarily Silverstein, through microteaching, was able to make sense of self-reported deficits in her pedagogical delivery. Summarily, I confirm with Silverstein, "A practical take-away from this microteaching experience would be . . . not only change the way you introduce lessons—given your awareness of the volume of talking you do to introduce lessons, but to change your approach, to use more probing."

Overwhelmingly, Silverstein lauded use of video-taping during microteaching:

Definitely, I think it's very helpful that I saw the replay of everything that happened because I am not getting told feedback through someone else's eyes. I see it myself. I'm like, did I really come off like that? Or did it really take that long? Because we don't always remember how everything goes down and then having an observer see you, and then relate back to you what was right and wrong, or to question what they didn't understand. Sometimes it's hard to really fully receive feedback because you don't remember things after you have taught, and you don't know exactly how it really played out. So you to your observer, you just kind of say okay, and hope that you can apply their feedback in the future . . . not really being fully aware of all that actually happened in the lesson. So seeing it for myself has made the big difference, because nobody had to tell me . . . it was right there.

Hough concurred,

[Microteaching] makes you open your eyes to what you are teaching, and how you are teaching it. Not many practitioners see themselves on video, or have the time to see colleagues teach. We in the Math department have the same planning period and don't get the time to go in and see one another teach. Of my fourteen colleagues in the department, I have only been able to observe two teach, and one of those teachers is no longer here. And I have been here for seven years.

Despite the collaboration that DuFour's (2004) Professional Learning Community were supposed to engender at Hope, Hough revealed scheduling and common planning still

prevented departmental colleagues from observing one another. She criticized the isolatory structures that promote collaborative departmental planning, but as an unintended outcome made team-teaching prohibitive. A veteran teacher at Hope, she reminisced soberly on how little she had seen of her colleagues' pedagogical delivery. The solution, Hough suggested—microteaching. In the case of Hope High's departmental scheduling, Hough rationalized use of microteaching within the context of Professional Learning Communities to ensure collaboration, especially in colleagues seeing demonstrated lessons among colleagues. This practice, she confirms, would be a valuable component of ongoing, school-wide professional development.

Essentially, that's the way real PLCs are supposed to work. Presenting lessons ahead of time, or watching colleagues present a lesson to see how they facilitated their lesson—what they did or said differently. Because I was the only math teacher that completed the study I didn't see that necessarily, but I saw the other English teachers kinds of see things from a different point of view, and I think they went in and implemented those things back into their classroom. If it was in math classroom, I can see math teachers seeing the value in microteaching. I can see members of the department asking what we fix or tweak or add through microteaching.

Resoundingly, all participants supported the use of microteaching as a professional development tool, revealing that they would not only participate in the process of microteaching again but expressed a strong desire to see the process expanded, school-wide, among Hope's Professional Learning Communities. When asked if they would suggest microteaching to a struggling colleague, or new teacher, all agreed that they would.

As Loucks-Horsley et al. (2003) suggest in discussion of the merits of professional development, participants in this case agreed. Microteaching is a viable practice with pragmatically usable applications that can be individualized for struggling or newly-inducted teachers, used within departmental contexts, or used in conjunction with a whole-school professional development plan. Microteaching, then, contextualized within Loucks-Horsley et al.'s (2003) discussion of professional development can be:

useful in making connections between teachers' existing ideas and new ones; provid[ing] opportunit[ies] for active engagement, discussion, and reflection to challenge existing ideas and construct new ones; challenge current thinking by producing and helping to resolve dissonance between new ideas and existing ones; support teachers to develop a range of strategies that address learning for all students. (p. 35)

And as the aforementioned allusion to the merits of homespun solutions from *The Wizard of Oz* suggests, Alfred North Whitehead (n.d.) echoes this, conceding "Common sense is genius in homespun." Within the context of this case, teachers agree, facilitating homespun professional development featuring Hope High School teachers, with direct solutions for Hope High School teachers, is key. So as Dorothy suggested in her poignant conclusion, there really is no place like home when targeting the idiosyncratic, site-based needs of an urban high school, and to this end, microteaching as a professional development tool is facilitative in this cause.

### **Inquiry-oriented Leadership: "So Many Questions"**

An additional preface to the coded themes was teachers' response to the inquiry-oriented approach providing feedback. An inquiry-oriented approach to leadership, as outlined in the article *Beyond Managerialism: Inquiry-Based Leadership in an Education*

*System*, Reid (2005) makes the case that twenty-first century leaders must use inquiry-based practices to “investigate the effects of practice . . . and to question their routine practices and assumptions” (p. 11). Overwhelmingly, teachers responded to the use of inquiry-oriented probing to draw out meaning during micro-teaching sessions, citing that they were not accustomed to principals or instructional evaluators using this method of inquiry as a mode of conveying feedback. Participants revealed mixed reviews of the process of inquiry-oriented questioning to garner feedback. When asked to describe the process of questioning during interviews, and in post-mortem sessions, Silverstein candidly admitted her initial discomfort with the process eliciting, as Erduran and Jimenez-Aleixandre (2012) suggests, that self-reflection is disturbing.

It was a challenge because it's not just . . . well I made these choices and that's just it. [Being probed through questioning] is a challenge because it makes you . . . it causes you to have to answer, and to justify . . . and justifying not only to you, but to justifying my decisions to myself. Justifying why I do what I do. But I enjoy that better than the typical observation model because sometimes there is deeper meaning beyond and behind what teachers' say and what we do, and an observer doesn't always necessarily know that, or have that prior knowledge about a particular class or student to understand why we make the decisions we make. So it's good to be questioned because that's when that type of information can come out. So it [questioning] creates the opportunity for clarity in those situations.

Silverstein captured the sentiment that there is a level of causality stimulated by questioning that requires teachers to formulate reasons for their pedagogical choices, and subsequently marshals teachers in justifying and defending their pedagogical methods. Delgado concurred, positing that inquiry-oriented microteaching forced her to think more introspectively about planning within the context of facilitating lessons. She revealed,

This process has forced me to listen to every word I say. And it's forced me to realize that every word I say is important and that every word carries weight. Especially when you are standing in front of children and they're listening to you, and you have to teach them something. The words that you say are critical, as are the decisions we make as teachers. The words that we say are critical so you have to *think about* what you're going to say, not just have a general idea of what you are going to say. This process had made me aware that a deeper level of planning needs to occur. I mean, we have lesson plans, we have planned for the day, but haven't planned ourselves yet. What are we going to do? This is what the children are going to do. This is what the class will then do. But what am I going to say is something that I have never been introduced to...not in my educational classes. I don't think I was ever taught how to plan at the university level. I just filled in the template and I assumed it was right and turned them in and nothing was ever said.

Anticipating responding to the inquiry-oriented style of questioning, Delgado revealed, forced her to prepare more copiously for microlesson facilitation. She elaborated,

This process forced us to prepare more. If we are talking about observations and walkthroughs, the question based feedback this method can be more beneficial to the teacher that was observed that just received a list of things noticed. Well, I think the basis of our interactions has always been questions. I think you've asked awesome questions because I think over this year in particular and it goes back to that time planning question. The truth is I am a I am an effective teacher I'm aware of that but am I an effective planner so my effective teaching can be more can be greater than what it is. So, the truth is that I'm a mediocre version of myself right now due to even though it's effective it's not my potential because of the time planning. So, the questions that you've asked me have lead me to that realization. That sure one kid is never going to forget foil characters and that's awesome but that lesson on characters was kind of like an idea that was given to me. This is something you could do okay so I did it. But if I had planned my own types of things not just this is something to fill time or this is something to get them to understand the book just a little bit better it would have been more it just would have been greater.

In this quote, Delgado revisits the notion that questioning, or in this case inquiry-oriented leadership, is inherently stimulatory, prompting teachers to be introspective, reflective, and prospective in their thinking and subsequent practice. When asked how

inquiry-oriented questioning compared to the traditional observation-feedback model, Delgado squinted, peering over the brim of her half-rimmed glasses. Through the gossamer smudges on her lenses she seemed to look far beyond the camera lens, the confines of her classroom, Hope High School, and even the scope of this study; she appeared to look to the future, a harbinger of the needed policy shifts in the training of school leaders. “For principals and assistant principals this process would require change. We as teachers would have to be trained more, but observers would have to change the way they do things too.” This pithy, yet poignant revelation bespeaks the paradigmatic shift that must take place if principal-led, inquiry-oriented microteaching is to be a viable tool for professional development. The shift from principals as classical-managers and evaluators to supervising coaches will require not only deeper thinking and training on the part of teachers, school leaders, universities and policy-makers, but will require a new social contract between parties as well. If Vygotsky’s (1978) earlier claim that leadership is a social practice is true, this case serves as a step in that direction.

Conversely, Hough and Arthur called for middle-ground between the traditional direct-feedback orientation of observation models and inquiry-oriented feedback. When posed with the idea of the inquiry-oriented protocol being used during formal evaluations, Hough revealed,

Me personally, I’d want both. I would want questioning to make me think about my performance, you know, make me reflect more than I do. But then I also would want to hear—‘I like this, but I didn’t like that.’ A littler more a reassurance. I tend to be highly judgmental and that’s why I don’t enjoy judging myself, because if I do I’ll be beating myself up and I have gotten to the point where I don’t do that anymore so I tend to back away from judging myself. But I do expect others to judge me because that’s how it goes in life that typically

people give you lots of judgments. And so I feel like when people come in they do judge me and I feel as though I want them to see why I am doing things the way that I am doing it. Because I want them to understand my point of view and not be as harsh I suppose.

This direct feedback and reassurance, Hough bespeaks, was reiterated by Arthur, who at the close of our of the post-mortem seminar checked to see if the camera was running and covertly asked for direct feedback, as receiving it was some sort of covert act.

I just need direct feedback. I mean, the questioning is fine. I use it to reflect, but I want to know explicitly, that people like what I am doing. I want the person evaluating me to know that I am a good teacher.

When asked if the quality of feedback that she typically received from observers was adequate, Arthur revealed,

It's typically not. Their feedback is usually a standard list of what I say and what the students did during the observation. They may ask a few questions, or give me resources or something like that, but for the most part they tell me what I already know.

Thus the collective responses of the participants toward the inquiry-oriented approach of microteaching in this case were divergent and preferentially disclosed. The participants' discriminating tastes on their preferred method of receiving feedback were just that, preferences, and within the context of broader findings, participants expressed that feedback was critical to their success, yet as earlier literature suggests, was ineffectual, and rarely received. Heeding the admonition of Arthur and Hough and finding the middle ground between these two methodologies may be both wise and pragmatic. Polarizing the method of inquiry-oriented feedback to that of traditional



observations that employ direct feedback simply mires the pond. As with most divergent methodologies, a dialectical approach offers the greatest utility. As determined by this case, some teachers require direct feedback to marshal them into greater levels of sense-making, while for some questioning is an equally effectual approach. If as Protagoras holds, and “asking the right questions is the road to the truth,” is it not conceivable that direct feedback, for some, may be a shortcut? As divergent the roads, the merits of these approaches are not dissimilar; in fact, they should be identical. In short, the process of facilitating a principal-led professional development protocol involving inquiry-oriented feedback serves as merely one approach among a multiplicity of methods to engender teacher efficacy. The remainder of the chapter is presently thematically to report recursive findings.

### **Vocabulary Instruction: Common Approaches, Common Challenges**

Vocabulary instruction is foundational to effective instruction across the curricula, so much so that researchers suggest it is the nucleus of all learning (Stone & Urquhart, 2008). Research confirms the overall importance of vocabulary instruction as a leading indicator of students’ academic success, and a strong indicator for overall school success (Baker, Simmons, & Kame’enui, 1998; R. C. Anderson & Nagy, 1991). The symbiotic relationship between successful vocabulary instruction, reading, and content comprehension are equally documented (R. C. Anderson & Pearson, 1984; Chall & Jacobs, 2003; Hirsch, 2003; Rupley, Logan, & Nichols, 1998; Stahl & Shiel, 1992). However, there is strong qualitative evidence to support the need for greater research in the area of best practices as it relates to both how students most effectively learn

vocabulary, and how teachers most effectively teach vocabulary. This section presents findings specific to participants' behaviors and dispositions as it relates to teaching vocabulary.

The literature identifies a myriad of proven, research-based vocabulary strategies teachers routinely use to facilitate vocabulary instruction. However, there were four prominent strategies that consistently emerged during the ten week study. Eisenberg (1976) identifies these recurring techniques to include: etymological strategy, morphological component of words, sentence context strategy, and dictionary drills.

Eisenberg (1976) defines etymological strategy as a strategy where “students are instructed in the history of particular words. The rationale is that by understanding the origins of a word, students will be better able to remember it” (p. 5). Hoesseini, Sarfallah, Bakhshippour, and Dolatabadi (2012) justify this strategy, rationalizing that “most English words descend from Greek and Latin roots, among the multitude of distinct strategies employed in teaching vocabulary, providing learners with an awareness of how existing words are able to dismantle into different roots” (p. 1868). Arthur provided a cogent example of this vocabulary strategy in her presentation of a microlesson centering persuasive rhetorical appeal: pathos, ethos, and logos. Arthur explains:

So we have been talking about logos, pathos, ethos and have been evaluating different advertisements . . . *Ethos* . . . or the ethical appeal, *Pathos*, or the emotional appeal and *Logos* or the appeal to logic.

Arthur in her subsequent lecture described the connotations that each of these rhetorical techniques denotes when applied to persuasive arguments— *ethos* being the Greek word

for “character” and “ethics” being its English derivative; *pathos*, the Greek word for “suffering” from which the English words “empathy” and “pathetic” derive, and, *logos*, also of Greek origin, meaning, “the word or that by which the inward thought is expressed”; and the origin of the English word, “logic” (<http://pathosethoslogos.com>).

The second recurring technique was teachers’ use of the morphological components of word strategy to facilitate vocabulary instruction. Eisenberg (1976) defines the strategy: “Students are taught word roots and affixes on the theory that the meanings of many new words can be derived through an understanding of the underlying units of meaning” (p. 5). Within the context of this case, teachers used the morphological word-attack strategy to facilitate instruction, however with some difficulty. During a microlesson, Delgado employed the strategy when teaching the rhetorical device, “fallacy,” to which she self-reported that she was unsuccessful in effectively introducing the term when using the strategy. Narrative from the microlesson illustrated Delgado’s presentation of the strategy:

I just want you to first brainstorm and tell me what a fallacy might be. What does fallacy sound like? What is it? It sounds false. That’s exactly right. I am going to write that down. I want you to jot that down so that you never forget what a fallacy is. It’s a false or ineffective way of making your point. Again, since your persuading us you are trying to make a point—but this is the wrong way to do it. This is the wrong way of making your point.

During the post-mortem seminar I probed to gain clarity on Delgado’s perceptions of how effective her use of this strategy was in teaching this term. I probed:

Ok, at the beginning of your video you ask the students what the word “fallacy” sounds like. Because we are in an audience of teachers we know what a fallacy is.

And the teachers said it sounded like the word false. What if in presenting this to a group to a group of students they didn't think the word fallacy sounded like the word false, how would you have taught the word fallacy?

Delgado adjusted her glasses, reclining into one of her deep, contemplative poses, to which she responded.

Uhm, well. I framed it . . . We had already covered rhetorical strategies, so I kind of framed it as . . . they were going to be making speeches. They did actually say false . . . thank goodness.

PI: Because I have used that strategy before too, and quite unsuccessfully I might add . . . “What does it sound like?” and so forth, and it didn't work. I can give you an example. I was being observed and the word in the text was émigré . . . [spell it for teacher] e-m-i-g-r-e, and a student asked me what the term meant and I told them that it was the British spelling of immigrant . . . same word, same root word . . . which it is not! And I was ill-prepared.

“Ooooh,” Delgado cringed, sympathizing with my embarrassment. She added:

Well. I set it up by saying that rhetorical strategies are good to use. We are learning about these today, which are probably bad to use . . . but I didn't say that . . . So I think I was leading them to it without even asking the question yet. Then I asked the question, what does it sound like. So in all of my classes, someone said false . . . so someone led us to it.

PI: I always get nervous when we teach prefix, suffix, the etymology of words and nobody still gets it. What do we do then?

Delgado: Yeah . . . I have had moments like that before and everybody is looking like they are not . . . and I am like, ok . . . so we did that today actually, we were talking about parts of speech and articles . . . things like that and I can't really say, what does that sound like because it's not a word that would sound like anything . . . and one of the kids was like . . . but the best I could do . . . Like if I said fallacy and no one knew. I would go in another direction.

In this dialogue Delgado revealed the fear that looms daily over most teachers, “What if they don’t get it?” Luckily for Delgado, through self-reflection through microteaching and inquiry-oriented probing, she was able to determine the shortcomings of her planning as it related to providing cogent examples of vocabulary terms when using the morphological strategy. Hinging the success of an entire lesson on students making the connection between “fallacy” and its definition, “false,” because the roots sounded similar was risky business. To this end, teachers must become more systematic when planning and teaching vocabulary in order to mitigate concerns and to shore up weak practices before they arise, to avoid undesired instructional down-time, or worse yet, misinforming students, as was illustrated in my case.

Another emergent strategy evidenced in this case was the sentence context technique. Using this strategy, Eisenberg (1976) describes, “students are shown how to use information within a given sentence to decipher the meaning of an unfamiliar word” (p. 8). Arthur presented this strategy using a short story called *Rowing the Bus*, by author Paul Logan. Arthur read:

When I was in elementary school some older kids made me row the bus. This meant that on the way to school I had to sit in the dirty bus aisle littered with paper, gum wads and paper. Then I had to simulate the motion of rowing while the kids around me laughed and chanted, “Row, row, row the bus.” I was forced to do this by a group of bullies who spent most of their time picking on me. (Logan, 2002, p. 242)

Through a series of gestures, a detailed diagram, and a discussion of bullying, Arthur was able to tap into the empathic vein of every member of the microlesson to convey meaning of the vocabulary. Through her vivid examples and discussion of bullying, audience

members were able to contextualize meaning of the terms presented, and gain understanding of the character's plight. Arthur explained:

So he sits in the middle of the aisle of the bus, in the row where people walk and he is having to row the bus like he would row a boat, like the song, but instead of rowing the boat, he is rowing the bus. To simulate, he has to make the motion of rowing in this situation. So simulate means to mimic or do the same thing. And he is rowing like he would a boat, but I want you to add a picture to help you to remember what this boy is doing. My picture may the bus aisle and the seats. You can draw your picture, I am sure you are a better artist than I am. And here is the poor little boy sitting on the ground and there is dirt and paper and he's got his arms rowing. And that's how I am going to remember it. And what's most important, while he is doing this, what are the other kids doing? Laughing and singing. So you've got the other kids sitting here going, "Ha ha." And laughing at him.

As demonstrated by Arthur, with this strategy, context is a critically significant component to teach when using this strategy. For urban students in particular, teachers must be aware of cultural relevance when contextualizing vocabulary, as was the case with mathematics teacher, Hough. She presented a word problem that required students to set up an equation to determine how much it would cost to rent a backhoe. Hough described,

In reality they knew how to write the arithmetic sequence, but they definitely didn't know what a backhoe was! I mean I have seen a backhoe before, but I also grew up in the country. I was like, well you've had to have seen them working on the streets, or in construction zones. That's how they dig up the street in the—sidewalks and things like that. It's a culturally relevant term. The kids knew the math . . . but couldn't answer the question because they were hung up on what a backhoe was. I see this happen a lot; especially on standardized tests.

This event reemphasizes the criticality of the need for culturally relevant pedagogy in urban schools. Greater discussion of culturally relevant practice will follow in a later chapter devoted to implications.

The last strategy, dictionary drills, described simply as, “students . . . selecting appropriate dictionary definitions for words according to their use in sample sentences” (Eisenberg, 1976, p. 6). Among the strategies observed, this one was least used.

Participants reported using textbook glossaries, classroom dictionaries, and even internet search engines for quick dictionary references to define terms but sparingly. Silverstein described use of this strategy when facilitating a microlesson from the novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. She explained, “I am noticing that every now and then I have to stop and translate and explain, so there are a lot of rich vocabulary terms and there is a lot of allusions of things that happened in the past. What is allusion again?” For this particular assignment students used dictionaries to define terms and to create pictographic synonym cards to define each vocabulary term.

Recurrently, of the four vocabulary methods identified by Eisenberg (1976), participants were unable to identify the strategies by name, nor could they identify specific resources used in planning for, and facilitation of vocabulary instruction. Nor were teachers able to identify explicit, research-based instructional strategies for teaching vocabulary. Overwhelmingly, in the discussion of vocabulary instruction teachers demonstrated use of research-based strategies when teaching vocabulary. However were unable to articulate the tacit instructional strategies they were using. In essence, teachers were using strategies, but haphazardly. As a practitioner this warrants further analysis and

deeper discussion of the implications these findings have on their practice, as well as student achievement; that too will occur in a later chapter.

In general, the consensus among teachers was that they were teaching vocabulary but with limited support. Participants expressed wishing they had stronger foundational vocabulary and literacy training as pre-service teachers while in their teacher-education programs, and expressed a strong need for site-based professional development and district-level professional development opportunities for them to become more efficacious vocabulary pedagogues. These findings reemphasize the criticality of principals as leaders of learning who are adept in providing targeted leadership to monitor curriculum and instruction within their communities of practice (Armstrong, 2006; Cooper, Scandura, & Schriesheim, 2005; Cotton, 2003; Fink & Resnick, 2001; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). In short, these findings add to the growing body of research in the area of vocabulary instruction, which scholars have stressed must continue to grow due to the dearth of research performed in the area of effective vocabulary instruction (Brown & Perry, 1991).

### **Teacher Education Programs: A Policy Discussion**

Overall, investigating the ways in which teachers introduce, integrate, and assess vocabulary was merely the backdrop of this case; and throughout the study this fact was reemphasized by all participants. The conversation centering teacher efficacy as it relates to vocabulary instruction was merely a springboard for gaining entry into these teachers' phenomenological worlds. Teaching vocabulary became subsidiary to broader concerns like the quality of the participants' teacher education preparation programs and the lack



of formalized training teachers reported receiving in their teacher education program coursework and in their pre-service training experiences.

Teachers were reflective on their mannerisms, pedagogical choices, the awkwardness of seeing and hearing themselves on film; but overwhelmingly noted was teachers' response to overarching policy issues, demanding more stringent measures to effectively train both pre-service and in-service teachers in vocabulary instruction. Of the participants, none reported receiving college preparatory coursework, fieldwork, or preparation on how to teach vocabulary techniques, strategies or methods in their teacher education program. All participants characterized their approach to teaching vocabulary as limited, and attribute it to the lack of training. When asked if her teacher education program prepared her to teach academic and math content vocabulary Hough flatly retorted,

It didn't. Hands down . . . No. They gave us all courses they thought we needed, you know, as far as the courses to become better a *mathematician*, not necessarily a better *teacher*. And that's a problem that I have with most of the workshops . . . nothing is derived toward literacy in math. Those trainings are not geared toward math classrooms, because we're a little bit different.

Teaching vocabulary, then, Hough revealed,

Is a matter of trial and error. I mean it's terrible. For teacher, their first and second year you are lost. I'd say by your third year you grasp begin to grasp what's going to work and what's not going to work with regard to literacy. And what works with this group of kids might not work with a group of kids in five years. You are constantly having to adapt. You are constantly having to work together with colleagues to ask questions. 'Hey, I explained it this way, can you explain it a little better?'

Hough's criticism of teacher education programs and their lack of preparation in training pre-service educators to teach academic and content vocabulary was a universally shared finding among participants. Delgado acknowledged the shortcomings of her teacher education program vis-à-vis teaching vocabulary. She described, "My program really didn't prepare me to teach vocabulary—content or academic, nor did it teach me how to lesson plan. You just pick it up as you go." Summarily, Delgado's experience revealed the shortcomings of her teacher education program in formally instructing her on research-driven strategies on teaching vocabulary, a critical pillar in literacy-based instruction. Subsequently, when asked to identify explicit research-grounded strategies on teaching academic and content vocabulary, she could not; neither could Silverstein, nor Arthur.

In short, all participants revealed that they never received formal training on how to teach vocabulary in their teacher education programs, new-teacher induction programs, or in the form of workshops, and school-based professional development, leaving room for great scrutiny, but even greater implication for policy changes within university-level teacher-education programs and within Local Education Authorities (LEAs), and within the context of state-level teacher licensure and accreditation program. Participants urged swift action in policymaking, revisiting the need for incorporating more literacy-based requirements for teacher certification as well as explicit requirements for university coursework in the area of vocabulary instruction. Moreover, participants call for greater access to professional development on vocabulary instruction, both district-wide and at the building-level. Again, readers should be cautioned that these findings are context-

bound; however, the overarching question remains, if the scope of this study were expanded to a broader sample, would the frequency of these findings be consistent?

The literature undeniably confirms the criticality of effective literacy instruction across the curricula (Beck, McKewon, & Kucan, 2002; Juel & Deffes, 2004; Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts, 2002); however, as these findings implicate, greater efforts to ensure foundational training in the area of vocabulary instruction must first occur at the university level for pre-service teachers, and then must be sustained for their in-service teacher counterparts. Findings are consistent with Meskill and Swan's (1998) claim that vocabulary instruction research is often "vast and untidy." Researchers and practitioners, as they forge the uncharted, investigative waters of vocabulary instruction must bear in mind the lessons of Ponce de Leon's quixotic search for the fountain of youth; the truest, best methods of teaching vocabulary instruction may never be discovered, yet the quest must continue.

### **Pedagogical Preparation and Delivery**

In revisiting their experiences with microteaching, vocabulary instruction was not the only area teachers reflected upon. Teachers overwhelmingly noted that they were often underprepared to teach microlessons, and in some cases revealed feeling equally underprepared to teach lessons during the course of the school day. Participants concluded that in the planning process, they thought about lessons, wrote down ideas about lessons, and even contemplated a crude flow of the lesson, but had not yet reached the sophistication of scripting what they would explicitly say and do while facilitating lessons.

Through reviewing their pedagogical deficits qua microteaching, teachers acknowledged that microteaching was instrumental in expanding their view of lesson planning and preparation, offering tangible, pragmatic applications for future planning. In this, participants generated dialogue about expanded uses for microteaching, not just as a mechanism to review, relive and analyze lessons; but rather to be used prospectively, as a preparatory tool, to simulate lessons before they were facilitated.

Delgado confirmed use of microteaching to effectively plan, describing how she envisioned microteaching to be used to facilitate what she termed, “a dry run.” This, she described would be particularly useful in helping to mitigate concerns with questions she had this year during instruction. She explained,

Reflection . . . well it [microteaching] definitely prepared me for fielding advanced questions. A couple of times this semester it has taken me a minute to dissect questions, and it’s hard to do that in front of thirty kids looking at you. And it’s like, wait a minute, let’s figure out what you said.

In this quote Delgado contextualized the concern that she occasionally was unable to answer questions students asked during instructional time; questions she described as off-task and tangential. Microteaching presents significant utility in responding to instructional shortcomings. By performing a “dry run” through microteaching, Delgado described that some of those concerns may have been mitigated. Delgado explained:

It would just take me a minute to dissect that question first and then it’s hard to do that in front of 30 kids looking at you. And it’s like wait a minute let’s figure out what you said and I don’t mind pausing at all to stop. But I’m interested in that cause that excites me. So I just don’t want to lose momentum when the kids are like ready to take notes and then we pause to dissect something like that. I think that’s a rich thing to do.

Common among the participants, Hough echoed this sentiment, acknowledging the benefits of using microteaching to perform as “dry run,” or a simulated microlesson whereby teachers explicitly rehearse their pedagogical approach, to lesson delivery, prior to facilitating the lesson in front of a live student audience. Hough explains,

Planning is more for me. As you plan and as much as I’ve planned out [a lesson], I can have it word for word, but it’s never going to go exactly as I write on paper. The kids might take a little bit longer, some may not grasp it, so you have to have to pull other examples. I can understand doing a dry run because the way I teach my second block is completely different than first block.

This notion of scripted teaching, or the framing of “teacher as performer” is not a novel concept. Sarason (1999) in his work, *Teaching as a Performing Art*, draws a striking analogous relationship between the preparatory practices and delivery of teachers and actors. Sarason (1999) elicits, “A teacher is more than a conduit of subject matter. A teacher literally creates an ambience on the stage of learning and that teacher is the chief actor, the ‘star,’ the actor who gets top billing” (p. 3). If Sarason’s (1999) analogy holds true, and for every actor there is a script, lesson plans are the comparable script for teachers. As the participants in this case acknowledge, characteristics like adaptability to the audience, a sense of high drama to keep students engaged, and critical reflection are integral components of preparation demonstrated by both teachers and actors; and Sarason (1999) distills that among this miscellany of indicators, preparation is the key indicator of exemplary instruction, and what separates good teachers from great ones. In essence, there are no shortcuts for the preparation of teaching. Practitioners must engage in copious pre-planning, reflection, planning, simulation of activities, and reflection in a

recursive dance, until the performance is just right. Sarason (1999) punctuates this point precisely, with a clarion call for reform as it relates to teacher preparation, admonishing, “unless we change and improve the selection and training of educators the fruits of educational reform efforts will be minimally edible” (p. 8).

In essence, participants illuminated the merits of using microteaching to facilitate what they repeatedly termed as “dry run,” to aid them in mitigating concerns within the lesson. The “dry run,” they projected, would be useful in mitigating concerns that may include: providing clarity on unfamiliar terms, providing relevant examples to illustrate points within the lesson, and to illuminate ideas that teachers may have not yet discovered in their isolated planning.

Silverstein concurred, asserting, that she too credited some lesson shortcomings to lack of planning. She explained,

At the most I probably run my technology, and may mentally prepare, or maybe even write down some questions that I intend to ask. But as far as actually running through the whole lesson, I haven’t done that.

When asked explicitly, if she felt that she routinely planned adequately for facilitating instruction, Silverstein was reticent to answer. The dialogue below captures this finding:

PI: Do you prepare adequately for facilitating instruction? Now that you have seen yourself through microteaching; now that you have reviewed your transcripts; now that you have taken in the totality of this experience, do you prepare adequately?

Silverstein: Usually; most of the time.

PI: Okay.

Silverstein: I won't say 100% of the time.

PI: Okay.

Silverstein: But most of the time.

PI: Yes; and again, none of this is an indictment. Would you say 50% of the time you adequately prepare? 75% of the time?

Silverstein: I'd say I don't know . . .

PI: And again, I say, that after this interview I am not coming into your classroom because have revealed that Silverstein is not preparing adequately. I just want to know.

Silverstein: I'd say at the most, maybe 65% of the time. I guess my students treat me really well because they always think I'm in tip-top shape and prepared every day.

PI: Right.

Silverstein: But I've never been called out for being disorganized.

PI: Right.

Silverstein: Or like, not doing something right, or something like that. And I've learned how to play it off when things go wrong. Like if I can't get the resources I need or something like that. I have a backup plan.

PI: Right.

Silverstein: But in terms of formally preparing and having a weekly or daily lesson plan ready every day, I cannot say I have that.

PI: Part of the dispositions of masterful teachers are being able to be flexible and being agile when problems arise. Kind of knowing where you are going.

Silverstein: Yeah.

PI: But across the board, every single person who I have asked that question has revealed the same thing, suggesting that with regard to planning, they know what the students need to know, and know where they are going in the lesson, but they don't walk the lesson out like a dress rehearsal.

In this poignant dialogue, Silverstein captured the essence of the assertion that lack of planning impacts pedagogical delivery. But that is low hanging fruit. Silverstein self-reported that her lack of planning is fairly routine practice; yet she has never, in her words, “been discovered.” In reflecting, as the researcher, and school leader, I can only imagine how much more efficacious Silverstein, and teachers like her, could be, if they adequately planned. As I lamented in earlier chapters with my *émigré* example, it should not take observers to draw attention to deficits in planning that teachers already know exist. If through the method of principal-led, inquiry-oriented microteaching, the social contract between teachers and administrators is to be renegotiated, the down payment of that contract must be trust. Trust that teachers will fully engage in adequate and routine planning, and that as Weick (1995, 2001) suggests, use planning time to engage in retrospective reflection for the purpose of sense-making, to avoid these pedagogical pitfalls. Duly, planning should be used prospectively to envision broader methods for achievement that “affect future sense-making” Weick (1995, 2001). Without these changes, already underperforming urban students will continue to be underserved.

Delgado also expressed that microteaching was beneficial in helping her to see the value in engaging in a deeper level of planning. She explained,

Oh, microteaching, this process, forced me to listen to every word that I say. And it's forced me to realize that every word that I say is important and every word has weight to it. Especially when you're standing in front of children and they are listening to you. The words that you say are critical so you do have to think about what you're going to say, not just that I'm going to say this, and this whenever you get up there. And not having practiced what you are going to say, whatever comes out is going to come out. I think a level of planning needs to occur. A deeper level of planning needs to occur because we have lesson plans so we have planned the day, but we haven't planned ourselves yet.



I think in the videos I was getting to the point that I reached earlier when I was really watching the videos and figuring out what is was that was going on, and why I was doing it. I do agree with the literature—for me at least.

The literature Delgado referenced is from Moats (1999) who cites that teachers are overwhelmingly underprepared for the task of teaching literacy in U.S. schools.

Moreover, Moats (1999) notes a dearth in professional development for teachers in the area of teaching literacy, and state-mandated standards based measures to ensure that all teachers are licensed or trained to teach reading in U.S. schools. Johnson, Berg, and Donaldson (2005) cite, “Licensed teachers are credentialed by state officials in a particular field (grade level and/or a subject area) by completing approved preparation programs or passing tests demonstrating their competence” (p. 55) further identifying the need for policy changes at the state and local levels.

Johnson, et al. (2005) further acknowledge that teacher’s self-reported perceptions of preparedness and its impact their performance, asserting that when faced with unprepared teachers, “their students . . . pay a price, suffering the effects of uninformed instruction and poor lesson planning” (Johnson et al., 2005, p. 50). Additional research from Johnson, et al. (2004) highlight the outcomes of a longitudinal case study of 50 novice teachers in Massachusetts that document the negative impact on underprepared teachers. “They struggle to keep one day ahead of their students, scramble to prepare lessons, and dread the prospect of being put on the spot during class. Ultimately, they worry that their students are being shortchanged” (Johnson et al., 2005, p. 57). The long-term residual effects of this unpreparedness, McCarthy and Guiney (2004) assert, decrease teachers’ chances of remaining in the profession. “Teachers who reported

feeling unprepared were more likely to predict a shorter stay in their teaching position and were more likely to leave their position” (McCarthy & Guiney, 2004, p. 121).

Conversely, research suggests that when teachers feel well prepared and have a sense of confidence about their work, they are more effective and derive a greater sense of satisfaction from teaching (Rosenholtz, 1989). The implications are great, school leaders must ensure the instructional ethos of their schools are acclimatized to appropriately serve students. Moreover, minimally principals must ensure that teachers under their supervision are prepared for the task of teaching—pedagogically, methodologically and most importantly, pragmatically.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF STUDY**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate the lived experiences of teachers participating in a principal-facilitated professional development microteaching protocol, and to examine how teachers' experiences participating in this protocol impacted their teaching practice. Guided by the primary research questions, "Is principal-led microteaching a viable tool to facilitate professional development within schools?," and "To what measure does hermeneutic reflection in the case of a principal-led microteaching protocol impact teachers' pedagogical practice?," this study investigated a principal-led professional development protocol, to gain greater insight into the experiences of teachers participating in the protocol, to determine the degree to which the protocol impacted their teaching practice. This study addressed methods to develop an alternate model of professional development designated to enhance teacher efficacy as it related to vocabulary instruction. Findings offered recommendations for a framework to promote more efficacious professional development practices qua vocabulary instruction within high school contexts. As a final preface, this chapter presents final discussion of the research findings and offers practical and theoretical implications, and recommendations for future study.

### **Implications**

Benjamin Franklin, one of the nation's earliest and arguably most prominent leader, offers cogent insight on his interpretive stance on the imperative of leadership and conclusion-making. He charges leaders "to succeed, jump as quickly at *opportunities* as you do at *conclusions*." Franklin's charge offers significant implications to practitioners within the context of this case, and is critical in distilling the impact of this research on the dispositions of leadership, namely those that juxtapose the principalship and instructional leadership. Principals, as Franklin implies, must be willing to cultivate the necessary practices that build efficacious teacher practitioners. This takes time, human and material investment, and most importantly contiguous, job-embedded development of these efficacious dispositions. At the nucleus of this case, findings are purely about the phenomenological findings of teachers as they experienced a principal-led, inquiry-oriented professional development protocol, and have little evidence to support my proposed beliefs that principals must be leaders of learning. This is significant and revelatory in illuminating that in grounded research the anticipated outcomes of studies are often not congruent with the presuppositions of the researcher. As a practitioner I realize the importance of the role of principal as a leader of learning, but this study does not have the evidence to evince that claim.

### **Implications for Methodological Changes—*New Methods, New Findings***

A phenomenological case study protocol was used to interpret this study's findings (Yin, 2009). This methodological format was used to explore how teachers facilitated vocabulary instruction to reveal their subjective experiences, as they

systematically reflected on a principal-led professional development protocol. Ultimately, participants reported notable challenges with facilitating vocabulary instruction, citing two root causes of their deficits first, the lack of pedagogical training in the area of vocabulary instruction received in their teacher education programs, and second, a dearth in training and contiguous professional development offered in their in-service teaching experiences. Given these data, this section presents discussion of theoretical, methodological, and pragmatic implications of these findings as well as discussion of implications for future study.

It is critical to note that this study is anchored by the belief that principal leadership is essential in marshaling school improvement, and more specifically, discussion of principals as leaders of learning is essential to principals positively impacting the efficacy of teachers as it relates to vocabulary instruction. However, the methodology used in this case failed to capture significant evidence to support this claim. In essence, understanding of principals as leaders of learning merely served as a conceptual framework to frame the importance of the instructional role of principals as instructional leaders. This was critical in foundationalizing the argument that principals as leaders of learning can create structures, like the professional development protocol presented in this case, to impact teacher efficacy. This study's findings do not prove, but merely recommend, that principals can facilitate job-embedded professional development to positively impact teacher efficacy in their respective communities of practice. Moreover, it is evident from this study's findings that subsequent investigation of principals is needed to evince these claims.

Additional data analysis in this study revealed three major conclusions, offering insight into potent methodological modifications if future study were conducted. The first, overarching conclusion revealed the need for additional study. Creswell (2007) asserts that action research findings are not generalizable and are context-bound, meaning that findings and conclusions from this case are specific to Hope High. However, implications for this study suggest the need for not only future inquiry but the need for study of a larger group to determine the frequency of teachers' experiences with vocabulary instruction within Hope, Hope's district, and even nationally. Given that four teachers volunteered to participate in the study, the delimited sample of teachers not studied may provide additional salient insight into this case. For instance, broadening the sample to include other content area teachers, teachers holding fewer or greater years of teaching experiences, male teachers, or even teachers from other grade levels or schools may offer potent findings, which gives rise to the next consideration for future study—participants.

Methodologically, qualitative research does not normally deal in quantities nor frequencies to determine correlation between the quantity of participants and findings. However, as a researcher, I can only speculate that broadening the participants to include more teachers from diverse ethnic and gender backgrounds, as well as diversity in years of experience, would only add to the qualitative milieu of examining how teachers across curricula at Hope facilitate vocabulary instruction. I submit that even broadening the study to schools other than Hope to facilitate an embedded case study may offer salient findings. Though inappropriate for estimating the frequency of qualitative outcomes for

future study, drawing from a larger group will give a clearer picture of the teachers' experiences with the nature of vocabulary instruction and will reveal strengths and weaknesses to be aligned to future professional development. So as participants speculated in this case, the lack of preparation for vocabulary instruction may not be an issue isolated to the four participants at Hope High but may be phenomena worth study within other communities of practice.

As an additional conclusion, social theory must remain a central caveat in guiding research in the future study of principals, professional development, and teacher efficacy. From what existing research indicates, communication is a critical component to the relationship between administrators and teachers (Moller & Pankake, 2006; Ärlestig, 2008; Seashore, 2007; Jackson & Marriott,). As Vygotsky (1978) posited in social construction theory, leadership like learning is a social practice, and as such the investigation of the structure and function of leadership cannot be studied devoid of one another. The future study of either will require exploration into the social contract between principals and teachers. As I propose in previous chapters, principals and teachers must interface in new and systemic ways to ensure that efficacious praxis is being habituated within communities of practice. To this end, microteaching can be a guide.

The need for contiguous professional development in the area of vocabulary instruction at Hope is merely an indicator of a greater need for continued study. Due to the nature of this case's methodology, findings cannot be generalized; however, findings would suggest the vocabulary instruction may not be an issue limited to Hope. Data

would suggest that if the experiences of the “Hope four” are reflective of practitioners in other districts, local educational authorities (LEAs) and states, that the paucity in vocabulary instruction in their respective teacher education programs, and lack of professional development gained are contributing factors to the marginal vocabulary instruction, and must be further investigated. Moreover, if teachers outside of the “Hope four’s” experiences are similarly situated, further work must be facilitated to ensure that contiguous professional development is happening, not episodically, but routinely in schools, at the local, state and nation levels.

Summarily, as hooks (1994) describes, theory has both a usable consciousness and profound pragmatic utility in aiding researchers with understanding phenomena, and in this case was instrumental in foundationalizing the pragmatic next steps for future study. Closing the chasm between theory and practice were of equal importance in this case, as Da Vinci sages, “he who loves practice without theory is like the sailor who boards a ship without a rudder and compass and never knows where he may cast. The theoretical implications in this case are potent; as a final preface, the remainder of this section presents pragmatic implications for not only future study, but future practice.

### **Pragmatic Implications—*A Challenge to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders***

A significant portion of this case discussed my role as a practitioner. Ultimately, it was more plausible to separate pragmatic implications from theoretical ones. At its essence this case is a practical one; merely an investigation to determine the role and function of a principal on a learning community. Given that, this case’s conclusions and subsequent implications are rooted in pragmatism. Thus the implications of this case



must be “living,” stimulatory and agential, evoking action among teachers and administrators at Hope High, and beyond. Too often school improvement plans, reports, compacts, leadership team minutes and action plans are completed, filed and relegated to the annals of a three-ring binder and shelved, only to be exhumed and amended during the next required evaluation cycle. This research must be different. Not admired for its girth, its scholastic aesthetic, or viewed as a compulsory checkpoint on the road to the fulfillment of a graduation requirement; this case must serve as a springboard for action, agency and discourse centering transformative leadership praxes in schools, starting with Hope.

These findings are to be used to contextualize the power and function of teaching, learning and leadership as a guide to the professional practice of teachers and principals within Hope High School. Teaching and leading are more than a means to a vocational end, instead they should be viewed and understood within the context of their social component, or as Hogan (2003) describes, “distinctive ways of being human in a world that is now one with an unprecedented plurality of lifestyles, value orientations and careers’ (p. 209). Noddings (2003) further offers, teaching must be “constructed around the perceived need for learning (p. 242), and the dependency on learning means teaching nor leading can “exists for itself” (p. 242). Ostensibly, this case is linked to the moral imperative of servant leadership, where leaders recognize their function in marshaling those that follow to their most efficacious selves. Teaching, learning, nor leading can be practiced in isolation, nor can they exist devoid of social commitments. A parable explains:

In a meager village there lived a man of simple means, his prized possession a paltry goose. One day the goose laid a golden egg, an anomaly among the ivory-shelled ones she normally lay. Enamored, the farmer began to prize the golden egg and its beauty, far more than he ever did the goose. Seeking to capitalize on this great enterprise, the farmer killed the goose, believing that he would surely find other golden eggs in her gutted cavity. But alas, she was barren, and with the promise of no future golden eggs the farmer sat forlorn at the thought of his would-be fortune.

Each day he sat rocking, watching the eastern sun fill his cottage with gleaming rays that made the golden egg dance in its light. In that same spot at dusk, he sat, the sun sinking into the western sky until it was swallowed by night. Days became weeks, then months, until alas the farmer died, not of a broken heart—but of starvation.

Teaching and leading can be much like this. As practitioners and policymakers we are often so fixated on gilding-the-lily, or refining the methods of best practices that we often overlook the utilitarian nature of teaching and leading, and their essence as social practices. The parable illustrates that as practitioners we often starve looking for the next method, when in fact our proverbial “milk and meat” sit right in front of us. As school leaders, we must capitalize on the most valuable resource in our schools, teachers, the *human* resource. In isolation this case holds the same utility as the barren goose, but when effectively executed within the context of school-wide professional development, principal-led inquiry-oriented microteaching has its place as a viable mechanism for developing teacher and leadership efficacy, and ultimately, change.

### **Next Steps: Professional Development at Hope**

The most significant pragmatic implication determined in this case is the need for contiguous professional development in the area of vocabulary instruction. Teachers articulated perceptions of a strong need in this area, at Hope High specifically, but

suggested that due to the dearth of professional development, through vocabulary instruction offered in their district, this case's findings may have been a district-wide phenomenon. In fact, findings strongly implicate that pedagogical deficits through vocabulary instruction exist at the state and national levels as well. Equally, participants expressed that they were welcome to both district-mandated vocabulary instruction training, and the idea of school-wide training in vocabulary development, feeling that it would be of significant benefit to their praxes.

Given these findings, principals, not just those at Hope, must take the necessary steps to ensure that the professional development agenda of their communities of practice align with the needs of their population—students and teachers. It is a general expectation that teachers use student data to drive instruction and to make corrective action; however, I submit that principals too, as leaders of learning, must operate in a similar capacity to ensure that deficits in teacher praxis are properly aligned with a cogent professional development agenda. Principals must use these data to define, promote and to evaluate the efficacy of professional development opportunities within their communities of practice. As Little (1993) describes,

For good professional development : a meaningful intellectual, social and emotional development with ideas and materials, explicit accounting of the context of teaching and the experience of teachers . . . classroom practice in the larger contexts of school practice and purposes, supported techniques and perspectives of inquiry. (as cited in Marsh, 2000, p. 142)

Little's (1993) blueprint for effective professional development must be used to evaluate future training efforts at Hope High, and within the district. Mere alignment to these

parameters is low hanging fruit; the real implications for future study in this case involve: teachers being effectively trained in vocabulary instruction using research-based methods, increasing the frequency of opportunities for collaboration in Professional Learning Communities to model effective vocabulary instruction methods, as well as opportunities for teachers to peer and self-evaluate using microteaching. For principals, contiguous instructional monitoring and effectual feedback must be employed to ensure implementation with fidelity. Lastly, both teachers and principals must create contiguous systems to engage in reflective and reflexive introspection of their praxes for the purpose of sense-making. Only through intentional efforts of leadership engagement, like those highlighted in this case, will practitioners operate more efficaciously.

A second significant implication in this case, through vocabulary instruction, is the connection between culturally relevant pedagogy and vocabulary instruction. As Hough illuminated with the example of “the backhoe,” discussion of vocabulary cannot be devoid of discussion of the context of culture and culturally relevant practice, particularly within the context of urban schools. The “backhoe” discussion reemphasizes the criticality of culturally relevant pedagogy in urban schools and gives rise to greater discussion of culturally relevant practice through vocabulary instruction. Gay (2003) offers insight, asserting that culturally relevant practice, “is the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning more relevant to and effective . . . It teaches to and through strengths of these students. It is culturally validating and affirming” (p. 29). These dispositions are all critical elements to operationalizing language and vocabulary acquisition, and equally

significant to pedagogues across the curricula. As such, teachers like Hough, who self-reports as having strong roots as a mathematician, must widen their gaze, understanding that to be effective twenty-first century practitioners teachers must also become strong literacy interventionists. Principals must marshal this discourse centering culturally relevant practice, understanding its significance to the practice of teachers across the curricula. As leaders of learning, principals must be willing to balance the bevy of competing organizational, managerial, and instructional duties to ensure that these dispositions are not just considered, but at the fore of learning and practice in their respective communities of practice.

### **Transformational Leadership: Becoming the Change We Want to See**

With regard to the overarching discussion of leadership dispositions, principals, as leaders of learning must demonstrate a series of salient attitudes, behaviors and dispositions to be effective. I argue that as Quantz, Rogers, and Dantley (1991) contend, “leaders do not gather followers, but help promote conditions and discourse which cultivate more leaders” (p. 108). Within the context of this case I contend that teachers must expect, and fervently appeal for more effectual feedback from instructional evaluators. Equally, teachers must not wait for evaluators to identify areas of known deficit, but rather, be proactive in facilitating self-led exercises that lead to sense-making. To this end, microteaching is a viable mechanism to support teachers in professional development, with a range of utility including: to plan and review instructional strategies, to facilitate a “dry run” of the lesson to mitigate pedagogical concerns, and ultimately, as a tool for reflection. Microteaching is of equal utility as a self-imposed task, and can be

facilitatory in the ongoing dialogic between teachers and principals through instructional feedback.

Microteaching using inquiry-oriented feedback is antithetical to the one-sided, top-down, traditional leadership feedback models of yesteryear; with contemporary school leaders understanding that novel approaches will require novel leadership skills and dispositions. Principals must be willing to engage in this paradigmatic shift. Microteaching is a viable springboard for redressing the imbalance of traditional hierarchical instructional evaluation models, in exchange for collaborative and negotiatory exchange between teachers and principals. Ostensibly, the behaviors and dispositions principals must espouse for this method to be viable include the willingness to engage in collaborative, inquiry-oriented leadership, clinical instructional supervision and coaching. Summarily, in the historical shift from organizational leaders to instructional leaders, and now to leaders of learning, I submit, principals must also shift their thinking about the structure and function of leadership in contemporary schools to be more inclusive, collaborative and inquiry-oriented.

Sergiovanni (1996) epitomizes the spirit of this method of leadership:

When one places one's leadership practice in service to ideas, and to others who also seek to serve these ideas, issues of leadership role and of leadership style become far less important. It matters less who is providing the leadership, and it matters even less whether the style of leadership is directive or not, involves others or not, and so on. These are issues of process what matter are issues of substance. (p. 277)

As Sergiovanni (1996) holds, transformative leadership strives beyond the functionalist mechanics of authoritarianism, seeking not to privatize leadership roles within schools,

but deputizing all within communities of practice to lead. Transformative leaders do not attempt to just meet the articulated goals of their constituencies, but rather, strive to transform them, to raise all who they lead to higher levels of efficacy. Foster (1986) explains, “The leader calls the followers to achieve goals that the followers and sometimes the leaders never even dreamed about” (p. 96). Quantz et al. (1991) describe:

While schools must be recognized as arenas of cultural politics, leadership theory must come to recognize that the transformation of schools cannot be built upon present assumptions of austerity. To transform the schools requires a new concept of authority which goes well beyond the present assumptions that there are only three forms of organizational authority—patrimonial, charismatic, and bureaucratic. It requires, instead, an understanding of democratic authority (p. 102).

This is the essence of democratized schools and foundational to the success of twenty-first century leaders of learning.

Through the phenomenological analysis of teachers participating in a principal-led professional development protocol, this study examined how teachers’ experiences participating in this protocol impacted their teaching practice. The range of affect was significant, but more importantly, through a phenomenological lens participants revealed the benefits, strengths, and barriers that permit and impede their ability to facilitate efficacious vocabulary instruction. These findings were more about clarifying the approaches the “Hope-four” espouse when facilitating instruction, to inform their future practice. In summation, principals as twenty-first century leaders of learning must possess salient attitudes, behaviors and dispositions to be transformative within their

communities of practice. The approach of principal-led, inquiry-oriented microteaching, as this study has shown, is but one method in an expansive body of theory and practice.



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## APPENDIX A

## RESEARCH SUBJECT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORMS




THE UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA  
GREENSBORO

**OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE**  
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Federalwide Assurance (FWA) #216

To: Carl Lashley  
Ed Ldrship and Cultural Found  
342 School of Education Building

From: UNCG IRB

  
Authorized signature on behalf of IRB

Approval Date: 9/14/2012  
Expiration Date of Approval: 9/13/2013

RE: Notice of IRB Approval by Expedited Review (under 45 CFR 46.110)  
Submission Type: Initial  
Expedited Category: 7. Surveys/interviews/focus groups, 6. Voice/image research recordings  
Study #: 12-0282  
Study Title: A Case Study of Principal-led Professional Development Using Micro-teaching and Inquiry-oriented Formative Feedback

This submission has been approved by the IRB for the period indicated. It has been determined that the risk involved in this research is no more than minimal.

#### Study Description:

The purpose of this study is to explore a principal facilitated professional development protocol for teachers that employs a layered protocol of micro-teaching and inquiry-oriented, formative feedback.

#### Investigator's Responsibilities

Federal regulations require that all research be reviewed at least annually. It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to submit for renewal and obtain approval before the expiration date. You may not continue any research activity beyond the expiration date without IRB approval. Failure to receive approval for continuation before the expiration date will result in automatic termination of the approval for this study on the expiration date.

Signed letters, along with stamped copies of consent forms and other recruitment materials will be scanned to you in a separate email. These consent forms must be used unless the IRB has given you approval to waive this requirement.

You are required to obtain IRB approval for any changes to any aspect of this study before they can be implemented (use the modification application available at <http://www.uncg.edu/orc/irb.htm>). Should any adverse event or unanticipated problem involving risks to subjects or others occur it must be reported immediately to the IRB using the "Unanticipated Problem/Event" form at the same website.

CC:  
Larry Canady  
ORC, (ORC), Non-IRB Review Contact

Study #: 12-0282

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO**  
**CONSENT TO ACT AS A HUMAN PARTICIPANT: LONG FORM**

**Project Title: A CASE STUDY OF PRINCIPAL-LED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT USING MICRO-TEACHING AND INQUIRY-ORIENTED FORMATIVE FEEDBACK**

**Project Director:** Dr. Carl Lashley

**Participant's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What is the study about?**

This is a research project. The purpose of this case study is to investigate a principal-led professional development model that seeks to chronicle, and examine the efficacy of an inquiry-oriented approach to teacher development and its impact on teacher efficacy.

**Why are you asking me?**

You are being invited to participate in this study because you are a licensed teacher at a mid-sized urban high school in North Carolina.

**What will you ask me to do if I agree to be in the study?**

I will videotape 15-30 minutes lesson segments weekly, during Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings, over a twelve week period. I will transcribe video-data and facilitated weekly lesson debriefings in tiered "post-mortem" seminars. Six (6) teacher participants were selected based on their licensure status—initially licensed teacher (ILT-first year), probationary, and career status. Data will be collected using video-recorded simulated lessons during PLCs, observations, interviews, and transcripts.

There are no known risks associated with participation in this study. The activities that you will engage in during the study will pose minimal risk. Although in design of this research I have attempted to avoid risks, participants are subject to questions and debriefing that may be stressful or uncomfortable. If for any reason this occurs, you can stop participating in this study immediately. I will provide you with information about persons that may assist you should issues in the study arise.

**Is there any audio/video recording?**

You will be filmed during the study. Because your voice will be potentially identifiable by anyone who hears the tape, your confidentiality for things you say on the tape cannot be guaranteed although the researcher will try to limit access to the tape as described below.

**What are the dangers to me?**

The Institutional Review Board at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro has determined that participation in this study poses minimal risk to participants.

You should not be harmed by this study. However, if you feel that you are harmed in any way, please contact Dr. Carl Lashley at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Educational Leadership and Cultural Foundations at (336) 334-3745 or via email [carl.lashley@gmail.com](mailto:carl.lashley@gmail.com). If you have concerns about your rights, how you are being treated, concerns or complaints about this project or benefits or risks associated with being in this study, please contact the Office of Research Compliance at UNCG toll-free

UNCG IRB  
 Approved Consent Form  
 Valid 9/14/12 to 9/13/13

Study #: 12-0282

at (855)251-2351. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the option not to participate in the study. Should you begin and wish to discontinue, you are may stop at any time.

**Are there any benefits to society as a result of me taking part in this research?**

No benefits can be guaranteed for participation in this study; however, findings may offer recommendations for a framework to promote more efficacious professional development models in high school contexts, as well as potential recommendations for future study of principals as instructional leaders.

**Are there any benefits to *me* for taking part in this research study?**

No benefits can be guaranteed for participation in this study; however, Findings will offer recommendations for a framework to promote more efficacious professional development models in high school contexts, as well as recommendations for future study of principals as instructional leaders.

**Will I get paid for being in the study? Will it cost me anything?**

There are no costs to you or payments made for participating in this study.

**How will you keep my information confidential?**

No personally identifiable information will be associated with the participants' responses in any reports of the data collected. Participants will receive an identification alpha-numeric alias to be used for coding and discussion of their data for the duration of the study, as a measure to maintain their anonymity.

Participants will, however, be referred to, by their given name during post-mortem sessions and in tiered discussions. Consenting to participate in the study is an acknowledgement that the information gathered from the data associated with this study, including interviews, transcripts and video footage may be presented at professional conferences, educational meetings, in professional books or journals or used to train future educational leaders within the context of professional development sessions. All transcripts, consent forms and video footage will be kept in an undisclosed location, off campus, and will remain locked until destroyed, 5 years after the study has been completed.

All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by law.

**What if I want to leave the study?**

You have the right to refuse to participate or to withdraw at any time, without penalty. If you do withdraw, it will not affect you in any way. If you choose to withdraw, you may request that any of your data which has been collected be destroyed unless it is in a de-identifiable state.

**What about new information/changes in the study?**

If significant new information relating to the study becomes available which may relate to your willingness to continue to participate, this information will be provided to you.

**Voluntary Consent by Participant:**

By signing this consent form you are agreeing that you read, or it has been read to you, and you fully understand the contents of this document and are openly willing consent to take part in this study. All of your questions concerning this study have been answered. By signing this form, you are agreeing that you are 18 years of age or older and are agreeing to participate, or have the individual specified above as a participant participate, in this study described to you by Larry Canady.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

UNCG IRB  
Approved Consent Form

Valid 9/14/12 to 9/13/13

Study #: 12-0282

**Oral Recruitment Script**

**Study Title: A CASE STUDY OF PRINCIPAL-LED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT USING MICRO-TEACHING AND INQUIRY-ORIENTED FORMATIVE FEEDBACK**

Principal Investigator: Dr. Carl Lashley, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

This is a research case study being conducted in affiliation with the Dept. of Educational Leadership and Cultural Foundations at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

**Purpose of the research.**

You are being asked to participate in a research study about the key practices that distinguish principals as instructional leaders. More specifically, this case study is an investigation of a principal-led professional development model that seeks to examine the efficacy of a professional development model on teacher performance.

**Summary of Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria**

You are being invited to participate in this study because of your licensure status. As a teacher in North Carolina you have obtained either Initially Licensed status, non-career or career status. Teachers with licensure in any discipline are welcomed to participate in this study.

**Procedures**

If you agree to participate I will videotape 15-30 minutes lesson segments bi-weekly, over a twelve week period, transcribe video-data and facilitate weekly lesson debriefings in tiered "post-mortem" seminars. Data will be collected using video-recorded lessons, observations recorded during PLC sessions, interviews, and transcripts. Participants will participate in monthly tiered meetings to discuss their findings with all study participants. Meetings will not exceed 1 hour. Participants will be asked to review transcripts weekly to confirm their accuracy. Program participants meet weekly, not to exceed 1 hour to discuss findings.

**Compensation**

No financial compensation will be received for participation in this study.

**APPROVED IRB****SEP 14 2012****Location**

The study will be conducted at Smith High School, in the Media Center. For information or questions concerning the study, interested parties can contact Larry Canady, researcher at 336-419-8922 or principal researcher, Dr. Carl Lashley, at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, in the Department of Educational Leadership and Cultural Foundations at (336) 334-3745 or via email [carl.lashley@gmail.com](mailto:carl.lashley@gmail.com).



**Study #: 12-028**

If you have concerns about your rights, as it pertains to this project or benefits or risks associated with being in this study, please contact the Office of Research Compliance at UNCG toll-free at (855)251-2351.

**APPROVED IRB**  
**SEP 14 2012**

**APPENDIX B**  
**DISTRICT IRB APPROVAL**

September 13, 2012

Larry Canady  
4993 Heritage Woods Drive  
Greensboro, NC 27407

Re: 121323

Dear Larry Canady:

The Research Review Committee has concluded that your proposal *A Case Study of Principal-Led Professional Development Using Micro-Teaching and Inquiry-Oriented Formative Feedback* meets the requirements of state legislation and the current research policy of

Committee approval does not guarantee access to schools or individuals, nor does it imply that a study can or will be conducted. The school principal has the final decision regarding the participation of the school in any research project. Teachers decide independently whether they wish to participate. The committee expects that identities of individuals, schools, and the district will remain anonymous at all stages of the project.

Please present this letter upon initial contact with the principal. We hope that the project is successful in helping to achieve your goals. Please feel free to contact me at 336-370-2346 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,  
*Carolyn Gilbert*

Carolyn Gilbert  
Co-Chair, Research Review Committee

## APPENDIX C

### PARTICIPANT TIME COMMITMENT

		Teacher
<b>Time Commitment</b>	Weekly	<p>[1] Teachers will facilitate 15-30 minute simulated lessons during weekly PLC meetings, during which time they will be observed by principal investigator. Following observations, teacher will complete corresponding Formative Observation Tool following each observation.</p> <p>[2] Teachers will attend post-mortem sessions not to exceed 1 hour per week.</p>
	Monthly	<p>[1] Teachers will attend tiered group meeting once monthly for the duration of the twelve week study for a total of 10 hours.</p> <p>[2] Teachers attend tiered meetings for a total not to exceed 4 hours for the duration of the twelve week study</p>

**APPENDIX D**

**THEORY & ROLE FIGURE**

Title			
Theory and Role	Theorist	Conceptual Function	How it was applied to research
<b>Role theory</b> to <i>conceptualize</i> the role of principal as a “leaders of learning”	DuFour (2002)	Conceptual	Defined the role of principals as instructional leaders
<b>Social theory</b> to <i>inform</i> discourse on the impact of principals as “leaders of learning”	DuFour (2002) Vygotsky (1978)		Identified dispositions of leaders of learning Leadership as social practice
<b>Organizational theory</b> to <i>explore</i> the impact of instructional leadership on teacher efficacy qua sense-making.	Weick (1995)		Sense-making and the impact of reflection on teacher performance and social roles
<b>Hermeneutic Phenomenology</b> theory to <i>recall and report</i> findings	Laverty (2003)  van Manen (1997)  Heidegger (1927/1962)  Husserl (1952/1980)	Methodological	Approach focuses on toward illuminating details to create meaning and understanding  Subject cannot be studied separate from experience  Highlights phenomenological hermeneutics as a mode of inquiry  Understanding of subjectivity
<b>Reflection theory</b> to <i>analyze</i> practice  <b>Reflexivity theory</b> for <i>meta-analysis</i> of practice	Schon (1983)  Dewey (1904/1938)  Galindo (1997)  Janesick (1999)	Epistemological	Practitioner reflection on action  Reflective thinking to investigate their practice; pragmatism  Auto-ethnographies  Reflexive journaling

Title			
Theory and Role	Theorist	Conceptual Function	How it was applied to research
<b>Leadership theory</b> to <i>reveal</i> the need for additional research	Ladson-Billings (1994) & Gay (2003)	Pragmatic	Discussion of culturally relevant pedagogy within urban contexts
	Beachum & Dentith (2004)		Discussion of culturally relevant leadership

## APPENDIX E

### REFLEXIVITY JOURNALING

This final thematic section presents findings from the fifth, undocumented participant—*me*. Through use of reflexivity, this section will report additional findings significant to this case. As a final preface this section will explore the merits of reflexivity journaling as a professional development tool for school leaders.

#### **Reflexivity 2.0: “*The Man in the Mirror*”**

*It was like the fragile Russian matryoshka dolls my third grade German teacher; Frau Gerstl gingerly exhumed from an ornate wooden box and placed on the table in front of us. “Guten morgen Frau Gerstl,” we chimed in unison, eager to see what was inside. Within its contents lay a stubby Russian grandmother, “babushka,” carved out of crepe-thin wood and hand-painted in a tapestry of colors. “Lassen Sie uns sehen, was nach innen ist!,” she cleared her throat. Her dense brogue hit the floor like stones. German wasn’t nearly as lyrical as Spanish, nor did it pour from her lips like cool well-water, like French. Quizzically, we stared at one another, not quite sure what she meant, her directives incomprehensible to our formative third grade ears; besides we hadn’t learned how to translate yet. But as always, her demonstrative gestures and tender smile made up for what was lost in translation. “Let’s see what’s inside,” she winked, to reveal that within the cavity of the *matryoshka* lay a smaller, similarly dressed doll. And as we soon found, another, and another, and another . . . and another. Each layer diminishing in size, but not detail, until alas, the last *matryoshka* was exhumed, roughly the size of a shelled pecan. That cool October morning, seated in the front row of Frau Gerstl’s class,*

in the grass-stained twill trousers and itchy wool sweater, was the day I became a researcher; and “*Lassen Sie uns sehen, was nach innen ist!*” or “*Let’s look inside*” became my introduction to inquiry. Even in my formative third grade mind, exhuming the layers of the *matryoshka* was compelling; and even more compelling would be, exploring the stories within stories. This is the spirit in which this section is written.

The “matryoshka-” or nesting doll-principle, denotes a scalar relationship of objects laden within similar-objects, and is further explained by social penetration theory that proposes that, as relationships develop, interpersonal communication moves from relatively shallow, non-intimate levels to deeper, more intimate ones (Altman & Taylor, 1973). “Social penetration theory” according to Altman and Taylor (1973) elicits that communication occurs primarily through self-disclosure and closeness develops if the participants proceed in a gradual and orderly fashion from superficial to intimate levels of exchange as a function of both immediate and forecast outcomes” (Griffin, 2000, p. 130). Hewing through the layers of narrative, reporting from each participant, each story was relevant, personal, candid and sometimes vulnerable. With the same circumspect insight I handled the delicate matryoshkas as they were carouseled through tiny third grade hands around Frau Gerstl’s room, I now judiciously handle the layers of story of each participant in this case, equally intricate, and just as fragile. But of equal value to this case, has been the omniscient presence of my story, through which the qualitative lens of this study has been mediated. This lens has not only framed and defined the *raison d’être* of this case, but has paradoxically refracted the metaphorical light of this study, through its findings, illuminating its spotlight back on me, the researcher.

Whereas the lion's share of this section has presented findings from the participants, I too must come from behind the sheer objectivist veil that separates the empiricist from the subject, the artist from his painting, the sculpture from her clay, and in this case, the narrator from the narrative, to present findings about this case, from my perspective as the researcher. Revisiting Sarason's (1999) analogy of *teacher-as-actor*, in the case of this discourse, I have served as the narrator. Subsequently, findings gleaned from this case were presented in the form of qualitative reflection from participants. While these qualitative data have been presented using in vivo coding, there yet remains a significant element missing from this qualitative jigsaw—*me*. In fact, the scope of this work would not be fully complete without a discussion of reflexivity from the researcher. This thinking challenges traditional empirical models that extol objectivity in reporting data. Breuer, Mruck, and Roth (2002) explain,

The social sciences usually try to create the impression that the results of their research have objective character. In this view, scientific results are—or at least should be—independent from the person who produced the knowledge, e.g., from the single research. (p. 1)

To the contrary, the investment I have in this case, as both a researcher and practitioner has been acknowledged throughout the expanse of this work; an unabashed refusal to side with traditional polarized thinking of empirical research that reduces phenomenon to labels—north vs. south, east vs. west, and either-or. Polanyi (1967) challenges this compartmentalized thinking, making a strong argument for the inclusion of self, including emotional responses, in the critical approach to knowledge creation. D'Cruz, Gillingham, and Melendez (2007) concur, eliciting that reflexivity is,



a way to combine objectivity and subjectivity . . . The participants engaged with the idea of a continuum between instrumental rationality and reflexivity as a way of combining objectivity and subjectivity, of moving between the two and legitimating both approaches to knowledge creation in practice. (“Practitioners’ Meanings of Reflexivity,” para. 4)

In a 2002 case study, participants characterize the dialectical nature of reflexivity as the metaphorical middle ground between objectivity and subjectivity. “I sort of saw it [reflexivity] as combining objectivity and subjectivity. . . . So you can be both, objective and subjective in the same context” (D’Cruz et al., 2007, “Practitioners’ Meanings of Reflexivity,” para. 5). While another participant in the case concurred, proving the merits of reflexivity by illustrating a concise non-sequitur argument,

[At the instrumental accountability end of the continuum] the assumption can only be . . . [that] if you’re objective then you can’t be subjective. . . . whereas it’s actually contextually okay to be both. And it’s realistic to be both. (D’Cruz et al., 2007, “Practitioners’ Meanings of Reflexivity,” para. 6)

This quote demonstrates the dialectical merits of reflexivity in allowing participants to be studied with a degree of objectivity, while the subjective dispositions of the researcher are acknowledged. Ancient Egyptian mythology and Greek iconography describe it best in the images of the femmes of justice, Ma’at, Egyptian goddess of truth, balance, order, and later, with Dike, the Greek goddess of justice, and bearer of the scales. Both iconographic images bear the scales of balance denoting their impartiality to the tide of cultural relativity, and can be seen buttressing the columns of buildings of antiquity, modern architectural structures, courthouses, and contemporary statues. These icons represent impartiality, objectivity, and balance. This iconography emerges as a

vivid metaphorical representation of what I envision the role and function of reflexivity to be within the context of qualitative research. Reflexivity in its approach maintains the balance between two otherwise competing methodological and epistemological approaches—objectivity and subjectivity; and just as the iconographic images of Ma’at and Dike denote impartiality, objectivity and balance, reflexivity mirrors this in its ability to maintain equilibrium between two otherwise competing qualitative traditions. Summarily, reflexivity maintains epistemological and methodological balance on the scales of qualitative research, allowing researchers to dialectically balance two varied qualitative approaches.

Iconography aside, Sandelowski and Barroso (2002) strengthen the argument for reflexivity as an expanded tool of inquiry.

Reflexivity is a hallmark of excellent qualitative research and it entails the ability and willingness of researchers to acknowledge and take account of the many ways they themselves influence research findings and thus what comes to be accepted as knowledge. Reflexivity implies the ability to reflect inward toward oneself as an inquirer; outward to the cultural, historical, linguistic, political, and other forces that shape everything about inquiry; and, in between researcher and participant to the social interaction they share. (p. 222)

Acknowledging the impact of my personal and professional milieu, not just on this case, but on my approach to research is noteworthy. Embedded within this case is the duality of these competing roles as researcher and practitioner, which is as significant to the discussion of this case’s findings as the qualitative findings of the teacher participants. As John Whiting sages, “An observer is under the bed. A participant observer is in it.” This vivid imagery captures the essence of my experience within this

case, and through reportings from reflexivity journal entries, I will present additional findings.

### **Reflexivity Journal: *Beyond the Veil***

Revisiting Sarason's (1999) *teacher-as-actor* analogy once again is critical in foundationalizing my experience as a participant observer in this case. If as Sarason (1999) holds, teacher preparation is analogous to actor's preparation, then my reporting of this case's findings would liken me to a narrator of sorts. The use of reflexive journaling as an epistemological tool of inquiry in this case, to orchestrate my reflection within the context of participants' findings, as well as my own, is closely related to the role a director would play in orchestrating a dramatic production. Goffman (1959) explores this dramaturgical perspective, as described by Galindo (2011):

Within the context of doing research, a dissertation can be seen as the front stage and the . . . [reflexive journal] as the back stage. In the dissertation as front stage, the researcher in training has to perform in front of an audience (dissertation committee, etc.) and play an expected role within an academic setting. In the dissertation biography or [reflexive journal] as backstage, the audience is not present and the researcher in training can step out of his expected role in the front-stage and act in a more free, creative and unbounded manner. Because of its less restrictive character, a [reflexive journal] can be seen as a space and a time of preparation for handling difficult tasks within the front-stage: the writing of the dissertation. (p. 6)

Goffman's (1959) existential depiction of a researcher going *beyond the veil* of a dissertation with reflexivity is both liberatory, and fundamental to the reporting of additional qualitative findings. Coerced by Goffman's (1959) deputization to be "*free, creative and unbounded*" (Galindo, 2011, p. 6) in approaching the dissertation (and by

sheer merit of me being a diehard literalist); this is spirit in which these reflexive findings are reported.

Borrowing from Lewis Carroll's (1865) classic, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, I go beyond the veil.

ALICE was beginning to get very tired sitting by her sister on the bank, and of having nothing to do: once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, "and what is the use of a book," thought Alice, "without pictures or conversations?"

. . . when suddenly a White Rabbit with pink eyes ran close by her.

There was nothing so *very* remarkable in that; nor did Alice think it so *very* much out of the way to hear the Rabbit say to itself "Oh Dear! Oh Dear! I shall be too late!" (when she thought it over afterwards it occurred to her that she ought to have wondered at this, but at the time it all seemed quite natural); . . . Alice started to her feet, for it flashed across her mind that she had never before seen a rabbit with either a waistcoat-pocket, or a watch to take out of it, and, burning with curiosity, she ran across the field after it, and just in time to see it pop down a large rabbit-hole under the hedge.

In another moment down went Alice after it, never once considering how in the world she was to get out again. . . . [and then]

. . . *she came upon a low curtain she had not noticed before, and behind it was a . . .* [emphasis added] (pp. 1–3)



Alice looking behind curtain (sabian.org/alice)

ACT ONE

SCENE 1

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(in order of appearance)

NARRATOR..... Larry Canady

*THE HOUSE IS DIMLY LIT WITH A SINGLE STAGE LIGHT ILLUMINATING THE CURTAIN. HAUNTING MUSIC PLAYS AS THE CURTAINS SLOWLY OPEN.*

*CENTERSTAGE IS A SMALL WOODEN STOOL. PLACED ON THE STOOL IS AN OPENED WORN LEATHER BOOK ENTITLED, "JOURNAL". ITS THIN PAGES BLOW IN THE WIND.*

*Behind the tightly veiled curtain lay the nuts and bolts of this dissertation. The margins of the pulp are heavily marked with reflexive journal notes; a milieu of thoughts and ideas, none more important than other. Some operational directives like, "Schedule Hough's last interview" or "Don't forget to buy batteries for the camera"; some stream of consciousness, "I have been splitting semantic hairs . . . I just discovered the difference between enquiry and inquiry . . . the first means asking a question, and the latter, is a formal investigation. I am performing both." While other entries capture the zeitgeist of what life will be like after defending, "Build compost bins for the garden, take up black and white photography, or write the great American novel." However, dense, fragmented or nonsensical the ideas, they were all epistolary within the context of a reflexivity journal. Ambert, Adler, Adler, and Detzer (1995) explain,*

Researchers are encouraged to record their personal thoughts and feelings about the subject of study. They are prompted to think about how their experiences,

ethnicity, race, gender, sex, sexual orientation, and other factors might influence their research, in this case what the researcher decides to record and observe. (p. 882)

Within the context of reflectivity journals researchers are deputized to use “personal experience as data” (Galindo, 2011, p. 3). Galindo furthers explicates the criticality of reflexivity within the context of constructing meaning in qualitative research,

*Every research has an internal biography, which does not always appear in the external narrative of a text. A biography is a silent and subterranean story that runs parallel under the official text. Its origins long precede the latter. A biography is distressing, contradictory, illuminating, and always in struggle in contrast with the logical, coherent and unified profile of the external story.*

*The inside story is made of those unspoken words, feelings, dreams, and biases, those underlying strategies where the harmony of the text originates. Sometimes it announces itself in the text, but always timidly, or marginalized in an appendix. Perhaps there is a relationship of power between the two, perhaps an intrinsic complementary relationship.*

*Without inside stories our external narratives are only boring repetitions of disciplinary power schemes. Without those internal stories, our work is lifeless and runs the risk of falling apart. Nevertheless, the emergence of the inside story would deform, immobilize and even destroy the external narrative. There is always risk involved in bringing together process and product in doing sociological research. But what would life be like if everything were flat, if there were no mountains as there are in my Bolivia? (Galindo, 2011, p. 1)*

M. B. Miles and Huberman (1994) add to the body of literature supporting reflexive journaling citing,

Good qualitative research . . . requires careful record keeping as a way of connecting with important audiences. The first audience is self: The notebooks of the molecular biologist, the industrial sociologist, or the clinical drug tester help each keep track of what was done along the way, suggest ways of the improving next steps, and give reassurance about the reproducibility of the results. (p. 280)

Though in the context of this case reflexive journaling was not tied to empirical reproducibility, but rather to Galindo's (2011) proposition that "personal experience as data" (p. 3) is a methodologically viable data source for qualitative inquiry. Ironside (2001) further supports this notion,

Doing qualitative research makes the impact of the researcher far more obvious than in its quantitative counterpart: the interactional and constructional nature of epistemological processes become more than elsewhere evident and can be experienced in existential ways. (The relevant contexts include fieldwork, intensive interviews, and other "close-range" techniques.) (p. 81)

Mechanically, use of reflexivity journaling (Janesick, 1999) aided in the construction of meaning-making in this case, much like the use of microteaching was facilitative in aiding teacher participants in "seeing themselves" through transcribed text. In front of the curtain of this dissertation the transcripts and journal entries neatly consolidate information through relevant quotes and in sterile textual notation. Yet behind the curtain, managing volumes of text, that were of competing and opposing discourses, or what Derrida (1981) terms a "violent hierarchy," where "one of the two terms governs the other (axiologically, logically, etc.), or has the upper hand" (p. 41). This ranking and selection of method in qualitative data, and my own reflexivity were as critical to the presentation of research findings as the participants' voices, and in this case, the reflexivity journal allowed me to pose significant questions, to ultimately choose the direction that I would take in presenting these interpretations. For instance,

*December 23, 2012*

*Galindo (2011) encourages researchers to use dissertation biographies to give permission or voice to random thoughts. I agree. Giving permission to my voice—deconstructing the formal discourses that are typically presented in dissertations is critical for me. This is liberating! First acknowledging, then accepting that these other voices/stories/discourses exist is powerful. Now, how will I develop the marginalized, “non-academic” voices and bring them to the fore? They are just as important to me as what Silverstein, Hough, Delgado and Arthur had to say.*

Nightingale and Cromby (1999) acknowledge and confirm the notion that epistemological reflexivity often presents the researcher with multiple ways of knowing. Wrestling with these discourses enables researchers to penetrate into deeper levels of questioning to deconstruct and ultimately reconstruct meaning. The authors explain,

Epistemological reflexivity requires us to emerge with questions such as ‘How has the research question defined and limited what can be found?’ Thus, epistemological reflexivity encourages us to reflect upon the assumptions (about the world, about knowledge) that we have made in the course of the research, and it helps us to think about the implications of such assumptions for the research and its findings. How has the design of the study and the method analysis ‘constructed’ the data and the findings? How could the research question have been investigated differently? To what extent would this have given rise to a different understanding of the phenomenon under investigation? (p. 228).

Writing in this manner was not only exploratory, but cathartic, as a latter journal entry reveals:

*December 30, 2012*

*The pressure to write formally is almost oppressive. Journaling gives ME permission to exist. The real me—not in competition with the academic me; but rather in concert. The tension between who I am, and what I say and do as a researcher are not divorced of one another. But they will never exist apart from*



*one another. Derrida from my comps talked about “violent hierarchies.” USE IN CHAPTER FOUR!*

*This reminds me of the Greek myth of Dike, the goddess of Justice and Adikia, the goddess of Injustice warring.*

*“[Depicted on the chest of Cypselus at Olympia]. A beautiful woman is punishing an ugly one, choking her with one hand and with the other striking her with a staff. It is Dike (Justice) who thus treats Adikia (Injustice).”—Pausanias 5.18.2*

*The remarkable thing about the story is that the two are indistinguishable—presumably twins or mirror images of Dike (Justice). How poetic, justice and injustice are indistinguishable. Whichever holds true, I image that I look a lot like them—in a battle with my academic self and other voice. We are identical, yet have distinctly different voices. The bottom line is they CAN coexist and even compete; and that’s ok.*

To be reflexive involves thinking from within experiences, or as the Oxford English Dictionary puts it, “turned or reflected back upon the mind itself” (Bolton, 2009, p. 14). Fook (2002) explores this redaction,

Reflexivity is a stance of being able to locate oneself in the picture, to appreciate how one’s own self influences [actions]. Reflexivity is potentially more complex than being reflective, in that the potential for understanding the myriad ways in which one’s own presence and perspective influence the knowledge and actions which are created is potentially more problematic than the simple searching for implicit theory. (p. 43)

Reflexivity is not a linear method of thinking, or writing, rather it is a recursive, existential tradition; a space for rationalizing oneself, for negotiating, a space for challenging one’s very existence. As Bolton (2010) suggests, the act of thinking reflexively is a recursive, messy, even gruesome process. I write,

December 28, 2012

*I feel like my academic voice is winning! I feel like my critical voice is a pariah within this exercise—completely unwelcome. Like that bastardized illegitimate child from Desire's Baby that bore too close a resemblance to its parents not to be unrecognizable. The shade its eyes, the gait of his walk, or in this case, the timbre of my voice, a constant reminder of its pedigree. As inhumane as an unauthorized surgical division of my conjoined selves, I may have to. The unethical disjoining of soul and heart, marrow and sinew, my mind and my being, my voice as a researcher and vocation as a practitioner is not only unauthorized . . . but unwelcomed."*

There are two sweeping intellectual currents within the reflexivity journal. The first theme centered negotiation of voice and perspective. Ultimately, the reflexivity journal deputized me to accept the multiple and competing discourses that drove my research, analyses and subsequent meta-analyses. The body of research confirms that do competing perspectives do exist, and acknowledges that when presented within the context of qualitative inquiry, can serve as a tool for professional development. Reflexive practice, Osterman and Kottkamp (2004) assert, "is designed to facilitate identification, examination, and modification of the theories-in-use that shape behavior. It is a process of professional development which requires change in deeply held action theories" (pp. 13–14). The practice of reflexivity within the context of this case, through recursive analysis of text, video, and interviews aided me in sense-making (Weick, 1995), similar to the process teacher participants underwent. As a researcher the practice of reflexivity was an invaluable approach in organizing, deconstructing and even coding qualitative data as I searched volumes of text for themes. T. Ryan (2005) punctuates this notion with stentorian clarity, illuminating the value of reflexive practice for both teachers and school leaders.

Teaching [and leading] is arguably an opportunity to explore self, praxis and human nature. Educators learn about what they know and uncover their own ignorance. This uncovering can be a positive force if the decision is made to use this opportunity to move forward, change and learn. (p. 4)

The second thematic current within the reflexivity journal was the meta-analysis of my dual roles as a researcher and practitioner conducting action research at Hope High School. As a final preface this section will present data from my reflexive journal to explore the “interpretation of interpretations” within these roles (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2000).

Scholars urge that recorded observations, though useful in capturing the actions, language and events of participants, still falls short of fully describing the events (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994; Peshkin, 1993; Schwartz & Schwartz, 1955). Though never captured within the frame of the camera, my omniscient voice as the research “narrator” was always present as a backdrop within each interview, and occupied equal space within the lines of the transcribed text. Within the context of the reflexivity journal, that voice, and subsequent analysis were able to be brought to the fore. The fact remains, within the context of this case, questions I posed, and stories I shared with participants for the purpose of meaning-making, were as valuable to the dialogue as their responses. As Cuban essayist Nin holds, “We don’t see things as they are, we see them as we are” (as cited in Epstein 1999, p. 834). As Bolton (2010) poetically captures,

An ethnographer can no longer stand on a mountain top from which authoritatively to map human ways of life (Clifford 1986). Clinicians cannot confidently diagnose and dictate from an objective professional or scientific standpoint; teachers do not know answers; lawyers do not necessarily know what

is right and what wrong. The enmeshment of culture and environment is total: no one is objective. (p. 20)

Undoubtedly, the indissoluble intrusion of my voice and perspective imbued research findings in this case, not only expanding this study's qualitative findings, but highlighted significant pragmatic leadership dispositions principals must engender as leaders of learning. For twenty-first century principals, reflection, reflexivity, introspection, inquiry-oriented leadership and coaching are as much a part of the leadership gestalt as supervision, monitoring and management were for their predecessors. Twenty-first century principals, as leaders of learning, must adopt these affective dispositions, and the associated behaviors and attitudes that accompany them, to ensure that the most effective teaching, learning, and leading are exercised.

*ACT TWO*

*SCENE 2*

*CAST OF CHARACTERS*

*(in order of appearance)*

*PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATOR [PI] ..... Larry Canady*  
*Hough..... Herself*  
*Delgado..... Herself*  
*Arthur..... Herself*  
*Silverstein..... Herself*

*THE HOUSE IS FULLY LIT. SCOTT JOPLIN'S, 'THE ENTERTAINER' PLAYS.*

*CURTAINS OPEN TO REVEAL A CLASSROOM. FIVE PLAYERS ARE SEATED IN*  
*DESKS IN A CIRCLE. A SMALL CAMERA MOUNTED TO TRIPOD SCANS THE*  
*ROOM. THE PLAYERS LAUGH AND SNACK ON LIGHT REFRESHMENTS. A BELL*  
*BELLOWS. TIME: 4:00 PM. THE MUSIC FADES . . .*

Center-stage on the dramaturgical amphitheater of the Cartesian plane was the series of postmortem sessions conducted each week of this 10-week study. Post-mortem sessions were filmed and transcribed following each microlesson. For the participants, the post-mortem seminars bore a comparable function to my journaling, by allowing participants access to the backstage interworkings of lessons presented by their counterparts. Mechanically, each post-mortem seminar presented participants with the time and space to see the behind-the-scenes aspects of colleagues' microlesson. During each session participants were urged to question, make suggestions, to collaborate and to counter any points made by colleagues during the microlessons. However, the lion's share of the post-mortem sessions, as evidenced in the transcribed text, was dominated by

my questioning. Inquiry-oriented probing was a central methodological component of this case, and as I believed prior to collecting data, would prove valuable in organizational sense-making (Weick, 1995) and equally significant in determining implications for leadership in this case. However, in constructing the research design I did not realize how valuable this approach would be to my own sense-making as an emergent researcher and practicing school leader. This aligns with literature from Coghlan and Brannick (2005) that holds, “Reflexivity is the constant analysis of one’s own theoretical and methodological presuppositions” (p. 6). Prior to this study I believed that to ensure credible research findings, especially in a case involving action research, that I needed to take a distant, stiff-armed objectivist stance in my interaction with participants; to the contrary, while engaging in meta-analysis within the context of reflexivity journaling, I came to the realization that this was not a stance I needed to take. A December journal entry explains,

*12/30/12*

*I came across a powerful quote today that have may change the direction that this thing is going. “Being reflexive and discussing reflexivity in education increases the credibility of research and professional development yet it is important to illuminate and describe the different kinds of reflexivity . . . This deconstruction and analysis of our own praxis has been labeled hyper-reflexivity” (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005, p. 6). I already member-checked in the study using the transcript verification and video review, but this is saying that reflexivity makes my work more credible, not less credible. So ostensibly, I can “member-check” myself using reflexivity. Dang! Another example of a story within a story.*

*“SAT Analogy of the Day” . . . SO, reflection is to looking at participants through a critical as reflexivity is to looking at participants and **myself** through the same lens. [reflection: reflexivity]*

*I found a picture that explains exactly what I am talking about. How in the world do I site this? “Power of Platform: Theory of Infinite Regression” on the blog Leftover Takeout by Rex Dixon.*

This subsequent meta-analysis of my dual roles as a researcher and practitioner conducting action research at Hope High is methodologically sound, as well as my approach in recursively analyzing the layers within the layers of story, my own included, within this case. The French aesthetic term *mire en abyme*, coined by André Gide in 1893, best describes this approach. The term literally translates to “into the abyss . . . which refers to a work within a work, a play within a play, a book within a book, a picture within a picture” (Metablog on Metafiction, n.d., para. 1).



Infinite Regression Model

Within the context of self-reflexivity, I was able to analyze the subordinated interpretations of my role as researcher and practitioner within the context of a more expanded study of teachers. In analyzing the role I played in this research, I acknowledged that my questioning played a significant epistemological role in

facilitating the participants' ways of knowing, through questioning, and moreover, participants' responses to my questions were facilitative in them making sense of their praxis. Paradoxically, the questions I posed were as facilitative in shaping my praxis, by cultivating efficacious behaviors, attitudes, and dispositions as a leader of learning. For example,

*October 10, 2012*

*After all of the video footage is taken, the data collected and coded, and findings presented, how will participants transfer the "knowledge" they gain from this case? Will the findings be stimulatory? Will they just see themselves in isolation, or will it be used for some greater good? What is clearer to me about this process in preparing teachers for quality professional development?*

Questions like these, posed throughout the duration of this inquiry, seemingly anchored me in pragmatism; grounding me in the understanding that beneath the methodological and epistemological layers, the poetic language and qualitative claims, that ultimately this case was an investigative exercise to determine the impact of a principal on a schools' instructional climate qua professional development, and nothing more. With this epiphanic clarity came the awareness that ultimately the ideas that needed to be clearest and most emergent within the context of this case were those centering best instructional practices, teaching and learning, and the renegotiated social contract between principals and teachers. Reflexive analysis helped to reveal this. What became clearer to me through reflexivity, Galindo (1998) confirms,

I have also learned that doing research or perhaps many things in life, the process of doing is always richer than the outcomes. Final outcomes are always polished



and falsely neat because they often hide contingencies and constraints and our most intimate discoveries and hopes as human beings. (p. 25)

I realized with reflexivity that those contingencies no longer had to be subordinated within the peripheral margins of the research, and that within the context of my dual roles as a researcher and practitioner, case findings may not be limited to the selected sample. In fact, according to participants' narratives, there was strong evidence to support that this case was the metaphorical tip of the iceberg. The four participants were a representative sample of the diversity of Hope, and that if they expressed challenges in feeling that they needed more professional development in the area of vocabulary instruction, more time for collaborative planning, and revealed staunch criticism of licensure inadequacies for pre-service teachers qua vocabulary instruction, then these could be concerns that the broader base of their hundred other colleagues shared. So it seems that I was on the right methodological track with posing my routine open-ended query, "What did microteaching make clearer to you today?" Though purposively esoteric, it was the type of reflexive query that lead to introspection among the participants first, and then, me. In fact, the Economic and Social Research Council (2003) published an online reflexive research guide presenting a comprehensive list of reflexive questions that researchers can apply when engaged in reflexive inquiry:

- What was the purpose of the methods?
- What was the expected role of the researcher?
- How was credibility achieved through these methods?
- What effects do these have on how the research is conducted?
- What were the limitations of the methods used? (p. 10)

- What assumptions are implicated in the theories that drive our research and are produced as a result of our research? (p. 14)

As mentioned in aforementioned analysis, renegotiating the social contract between school leaders and teachers was of equal significance to this study. In understanding the need for renegotiating this contract, I first had to determine the terms of the existing one. In questioning participants, the consensus expressed was the concern Hough summed—teachers are often preoccupied with “getting a good evaluation.” Arthur echoed this sentiment revealing that teachers are equally preoccupied with, “administrators liking what we are teaching;” to which I challenge, that administrators, in their role as instructional leaders and leaders of learning, should be concerned with neither.

PI: And that’s the interesting part, everyone mentions the liking part. That becomes very subjective. Evaluations are not supposed to be that at all. They are supposed to be about what teachers said and did, what was the best practice used. And we all say, ‘I got a bad evaluation’ or ‘I got a good evaluation.’ You know it’s not even the personal part of it that matters, it’s about the professional part. Everybody says it . . . including me when I was a teacher. And in observing folks, at the end of the day, however much feedback I give or receive, the singular question stands . . . was it “good” or “bad?”; because it’s [evaluations] are linked to . . .

Hough: Jobs and money and things like that.

PI: Yes. Merit pay and all of that.

Given this, in renegotiating the social contract between school leaders and teachers, factors such as merit- and incentive-based pay structures and interpersonal relationships play a significant role in the subjectivity of evaluations as perceived by participants

(myself included). Therefore, if the contract is to be renegotiated, objective measures, like those presented in this case with microteaching, must be espoused to ground evaluator subjectivity. Summarily, through this shift, microteaching moves evaluators further along the continuum toward neutrality, creating spaces where legitimate negotiation among school leaders and teachers can take place, despite the fiduciary and incentive-based entanglements that often loom as the white elephant in the corner of post-observation conference proceedings.

Challenging the language of whether the evaluation was “good” or “bad” is also a challenge of the axiological value placed on the feedback given to teachers. As mentioned in previous chapters, school leaders must dig deeper wells, improving the depth of feedback given to teachers; consequently, teachers must demand more effectual and sophisticated analyses when receiving this feedback. Much like the pygmalion metamorphose of the boorish Eliza Doolittle in George Bernard Shaw’s (1964) film, *My Fair Lady*. From the daughter of a quotidian chimney sweep with few social graces, to a refined lady-in-waiting among the English bourgeoisie, Eliza’s change did not come at the hand of Professor Higgins, as he pompously thought, rather her change, came because of their *collective* work. Analogously, teachers and school leaders must work in concert to engender this same change, not isolation, but in concert.

In a final scene, as the transmuted Eliza emerges from her chambers, unrecognizable to all, the thunderstruck Professor Higgins beams, “Eliza, you’re magnificent. Five minutes ago, you were a millstone around my neck, and now you’re a tower of strength, a consort battleship. I like you this way.” Higgins’s monologue is

analogous to the change in feedback that must take place among school leaders and teachers as they renegotiate their social contract. Though Higgins' comparison of Eliza to a millstone is not the feedback that teachers are looking for, his *approach* was key in helping Eliza to achieve change. Only through coaching, probing, modeling and collaboration with Eliza were the two able to make inroads. So too must be the dynamic among teachers and school leaders. Revisiting Higgins' metaphor, the current subjective paradigm, is the millstone, ensnaring, even weighing down the relationship between teachers and school leaders; while the paradigmatic shift I call for qua microteaching is the winding staircase leading to the fortified tower of which Higgins bespeaks. Poeticism aside, microteaching, through its use of objectivity in observing teachers is a conduit to renegotiating the social contract between school leaders and teachers. Only through this renegotiation will deep, effectual change occur in and around arts of teaching and leading.

*ACT THREE*

*SCENE 3*

*CAST OF CHARACTERS*

*(in order of appearance)*

*LARRY CANADY* .....Himself

THE HOUSE IS LIT. QUINCY JONES'S (1977) SCORE "A BRAND NEW DAY"

BLARES. CURTAINS OPEN TO RAUCOUS APPLAUSE FROM THE AUDIENCE.

PLAYERS BOW. CURTAINS CLOSE . . .

Warin et al. (2006) argue that self-awareness is an essential tool for teachers and that reflective practice is essential to our capacity to interrogate and make sense of the self. Comparatively, Warin et al. (2006) characterize reflexivity as "a means that we are constantly getting evidence about how effective or worthwhile our actions are" (p. 127). Warin et al. (2006) further elaborate that as researchers, reflexivity can "change what we are doing according to the evidence of its value. To do so, of course, requires being reflective" (p. 127). Both reflection and reflexivity in this case have been facilitative in generating dialogue about change to the practices of teaching, learning and leading. This discourse on change related to the behaviors and dispositions of the participants that include the need for: more copious pedagogical preparation, greater personal and professional introspection and reflection qua questioning, as well as offering more effectual modes of feedback. These dispositions are indissolubly related to teacher praxis, professional development, and ultimately, teacher efficacy. Reflection and reflexivity have been facilitative in spawning similar change in defining the multiple ways of

knowing as it relates to the practice of principals as leaders of learning. Moreover, as an emergent researcher and practitioner, the fundamental use of personal experience as a data source in deconstructing the research design and method of this case, facilitated significant change in my praxis as an emergent researcher and practitioner. Incidentally, these changes were as revelatory as they were liberatory. Reflexivity journaling allowed me to go behind the curtain of my ideological and methodological framework, to expose the gears-shifts, cogs and spinets working backstage. Once inside, I was able to pull apart the internal mechanisms within the structure and tinker with their parts. It turns out, that the machine was my dissertation, and that the parts were the methods within this case. Ironside (2001) validates this existential experience,

The [practitioner] practicing from a postmodern perspective is committed to revealing and deconstructing the politics of difference in education. Deconstruction is not just a method but is a way of thinking about or seeing the danger of what is powerful and useful. (Ironside, 2001, p. 81)

In this chapter, the responses of the participants drove the discourse. Participants' findings and analyses, along with my own, were presented thematically using in vivo coding. In distinguishing the key dispositions and practices that establish principals as instructional leaders, participants determined that inquiry-oriented microteaching is a viable, facilitative instrument through which to develop teachers professionally. Participants overwhelmingly found the principal-led microteaching protocol beneficial to their professional praxis, and overwhelmingly indicated expanded uses for the tool within their present professional contexts. Participants overwhelmingly illuminated the pragmatic merits of the protocol on their ability to reflect on their practice, identified uses

of microteaching as a tool for lesson planning, scripting and simulated preparatory teaching, as well as a pragmatic tool for use within the academic content context of Professional Learning Communities. However utilitarian in its merits, readers are cautioned that principal-led, inquiry-oriented microteaching is not a panacea, nor can it replace the industriousness of good old-fashioned hard work, copious planning and electric pedagogical delivery. This protocol is merely one method in a grander scholastic landscape; merely one case in an ever-expanding body of knowledge.

Revisiting Carroll's (1865) Alice's Adventures in Wonderland:

. . . and she found herself lying on the bank, with her head in the lap of her sister, who was gently brushing away some dead leaves that had fluttered down from the trees upon her face.

"Wake up, Alice dear!" said her sister. "Why, what a long sleep you've had!"

"Oh, I've had such a curious dream!" . . . and she told her . . . as well as she could remember them, all these strange adventures of hers that you have just been reading about; and, when she finished, her sister kissed her, and said, "It was a curious dream . . ." (p. 89)

Chasing the scholastic white rabbit into his hole I, like Alice, during the course of this study have cried tears that flooded my hallways, and caucused with sage caterpillars, I have been perplexed with methodological riddles and distorted images of myself . . . stories within stories. I have wrestled with kings and queens, only to find that this exercise was *just a dissertation* . . . and like Alice, I am no longer afraid.

*As I packed the tiny matroyskas, one inside the other, their stories disappeared into the full-bodied bellies of its larger awaiting cavity. The robust, toothy smiles of each were swallowed like small fish giving way to larger ones. Each of the matroyskas fit*

*together neatly, perfectly inside its larger pear-shaped shell, until alas they were all reassembled. The storied pasts of each neatly reconstructed, deeply subordinated within the bowels of its sister.*

*The matroyska's finely painted lines bowed a warm smile, a welcome invitation for the next to peer into the recesses of her belly. Frau Gerstl leaned in over my shoulder, her crimson scarf pouring over my desk. "Wie war Ihr Blick nach innen?" she winked. To which I returned, "My look inside was fine . . . just fine."*